

Times 10

Your Magazine of Choice
April '99 Vol 6 Number 7

Homophobia
..it's Time to
talk
Pg's 8,9

Identity
Pg's 11, 12, 14
Politics
Pg's 6, 7, 10

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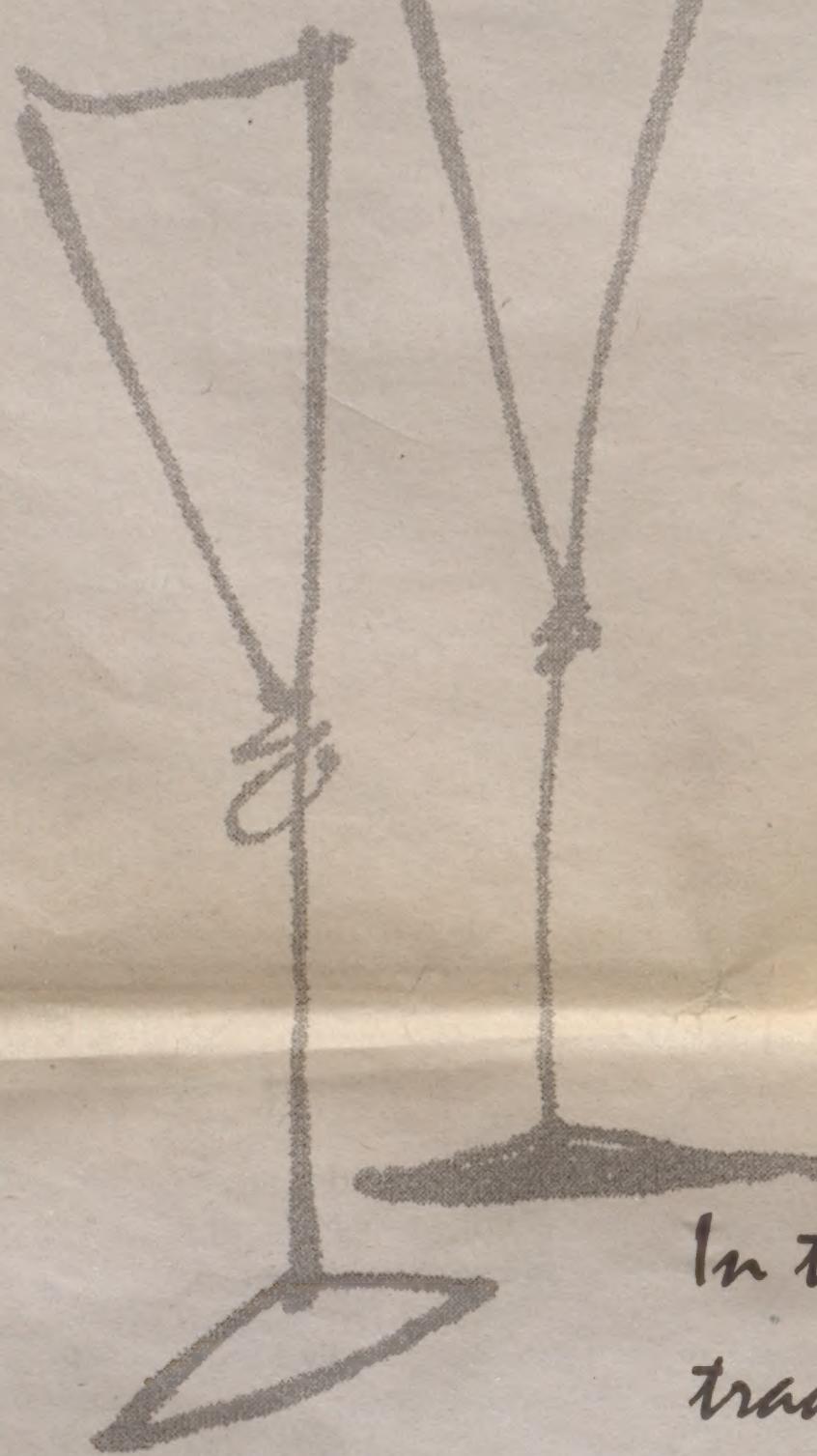
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Vol. 6 Number 7
April, 1999
Edmonton, Alberta

News & Notes from the Battlefront.....	4
Barebacking.....	5
Capital City Politics.....	6
Editorial Comments.....	7
Homophobic Society Stands Accused..	8
Groups that Promote Hatred.....	8
Equality for All.....	10
AIDS Network Update.....	11
Community Support Groups.....	12
Becoming Ourselves.....	14
Five Major Myths about Alcoholics....	16
Intro to STDs.....	18
A Taste of Music.....	20
News from GLCCE.....	21
Speaking of Normal.....	23
Truth is Out There.....	24
Terms of Same-Sex.....	26
Managing Your Money.....	28
Rayven's Nest.....	32

Times .10 Magazine
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada
Times .10 Publications Non-Profit Society

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<http://www.times10.org>

Phone: (780) 415-5616
Fax: (780) 455-6540

National Toll Free 1-888-Times10

TIMES .10 is published TEN TIMES A YEAR by THE TIMES .10 Publications Society,
10121-124 STREET, EDMONTON, ALBERTA T5N 1P5, (780) 415-5616 OR FAX
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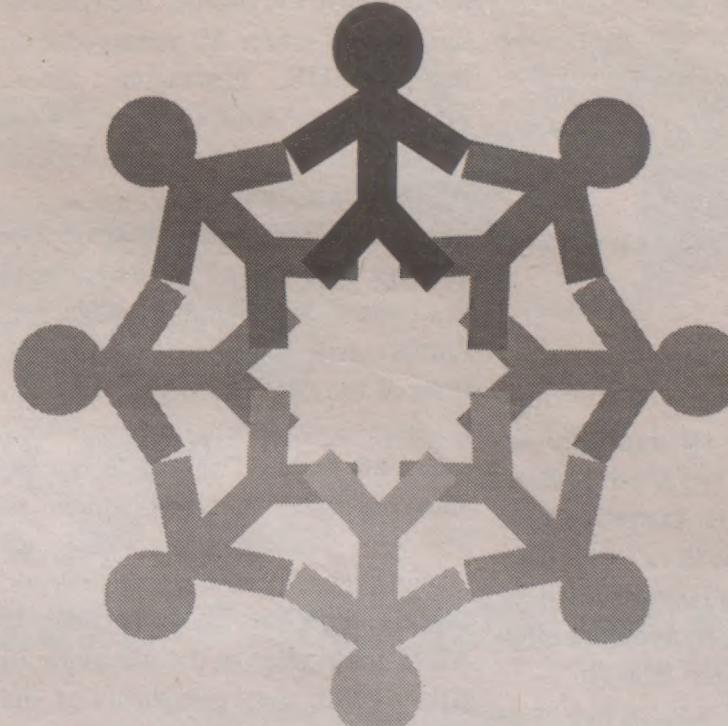
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FYI: News & Notes from the HIV/AIDS Battlefront

"U.S. to Assess Impact of AIDS on Children"

PANA Wire Service

The U.S. government will send a team of researchers to Zambia, South Africa, and Uganda to determine the impact of HIV on children in these countries. White House AIDS Policy Director Sandra Thurman said that President Clinton had personally initiated the trip. Clinton recently dedicated \$10 million in U.S. funds for children orphaned by or at risk for HIV infection in Africa. The three countries were selected due to their specific progress against the disease.

"World Bank Agrees to Speed Up Accord on Health Loan"

Itar Wire Service

Russian Health Minister Vladimir Starodubov said Tuesday that negotiations with the World Bank concerning a \$150 million loan for medicines and health supplies were progressing and that he hoped to obtain the funds by October. Russia needs the money to purchase drugs and other medical supplies to deal with an increase in a number of infectious diseases, including AIDS and tuberculosis. Officials from both the World Bank and Russia agreed they needed to accelerate work on the deal. In April, World Bank officials are scheduled to visit Russia and finalize the terms of the loan.

"Common Protein May Link Viruses"

United Press International

Research conducted at Northwestern University indicates that there are similarities between the Ebola virus, HIV, and the pathogens that cause measles, mumps, and other infections. Scientists determined the structure of a protein that the viruses use to enter host cells. The protein, called the "fusion protein," snags the membrane of a host cell, allowing the virus to enter the cell. The discovery, which is documented in today's edition of Molecular Cell, may help scientists develop antiviral medications.

"Canada Approves AIDS Drug Sustiva"

Reuters

Canadian health authorities have approved the non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitor Sustiva for use against HIV-1, reports manufacturer DuPont Co. Sustiva is the first once-daily anti-HIV medication to be approved by the Canadian Health Protection Branch.

"First Trial of HIV Vaccine Begins in Thailand"

Reuters

HIV vaccine trials will begin today

in Thailand, with six volunteers receiving their initial inoculations. The subjects—all of whom use injection drugs—are the first of 2,500 people in the country to be involved in the three-year clinical trial. Half of the subjects will receive the vaccine, while the other half will be given placebo. The vaccine was developed by VaxGen in the United States and is designed to confer resistance against the HIV strain prevalent in Thailand, the rest of Asia, and the Pacific Rim.

"Anti-AIDS Proteins in Saliva"

Washington Post

A report published in the March 16 issue of the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences indicates that proteins found in urine, tears, saliva, and mother's

milk appear to neutralize HIV. Researchers discovered the proteins, called lysozyme and ribonuclease, while analyzing a hormone produced during pregnancy that has an inhibitory effect on HIV. The findings may explain why HIV is not transmitted through saliva. Lead researcher Sylvia Lee Huang, of the New York University School of Medicine, said that the proteins may be useful as anti-AIDS agents and that they will likely be well-tolerated by the body.

"AIDS Drastically Cuts Life Spans in Southern African Nations"

Philadelphia Inquirer

The U.S. Census Bureau reports that people in five southern African nations have the shortest life spans in the world—under 40 years—due to high AIDS mortality rates. Furthermore, Andrew Mutandwa, spokesman for the Southern African AIDS Information

Dissemination Service, predicts that average life spans in Botswana, Zimbabwe, Swaziland, Malawi, and Zambia will continue to decrease. Prior to the AIDS epidemic, average life spans in the five nations measured above 65 years. The census bureau also reported that life spans in Ethiopia, Namibia, Rwanda, and Uganda have fallen to under 45 years. The 21 countries with the highest AIDS death rates in the world are in Africa, with over two-thirds of the global AIDS population located in Africa. Southern Africa has been most affected by AIDS, which some experts believe is due in part to its extensive highway system.



"Indian 'Cure' for Hepatitis B"

BBC News Online

A multinational research team has found indications that the Keezhanali plant—an Indian medical plant conventionally used in folkloric medicine to treat jaundice—may contain substances that are effective in the treatment of hepatitis B virus (HBV). The researchers, from the University of

Madras in South India and the Scottish Centre for Infection in Glasgow, report that treatment with the plant appears to be more effective against the virus than any other drug tested to date—including lamivudine and interferon. The drug reportedly stopped HBV from multiplying and cleared up symptoms within a month in

30 percent of subjects tested; in the remaining cases, HBV was rendered non-infective more than half the time. HBV is more than 100 times more infectious than HIV and is common in Asia.

"U.N. AIDS Chief Says No Vaccine for At Least 10 Years"

Fox News Online

The head of the Joint U.N. Program on HIV/AIDS, Dr. Peter Piot, said Wednesday that an HIV vaccine would not be available for at least 10 more years. Piot added that prevention is the only current option available for reducing the spread of the virus, which infects 35 million people worldwide. Piot also noted that the disease is increasingly affecting young people and that "there's still far too little attention given to AIDS." UNAIDS is trying to increase this year HIV-prevention efforts in Africa; Zimbabwe, Swaziland, Botswana, Namibia, and South Africa are estimated to have 25 percent to 33 percent of their adult populations infected with the virus. HIV is also expected to cause a significant decline in the life expectancy of these populations, resulting in economic problems.



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Barebacking to the Millennium!

Frankly, It's More Than A Bit Frightening!
By Robert Smith, Health Promotions AIDS Network of Edmonton

Last month, Times 10 ran an article titled "The AIDS Cult and its Seroconverts". The article was part of a much larger piece by Ian Young, and a larger ongoing dialogue outlining some of the issues that form a philosophical and psychological undercurrent in what is appearing to be an emerging sexual risk-taking.

In reading several articles available on the Internet, and in mainstream journals, I have not been able to put my finger on exactly what it is that we are being told here. Yes, it is quite clear that an increasing number of men are carrying on an active sex life with no consideration for, in fact open disdain for, social and political attempts at promoting the HIV-negative lifestyle. Gay men are purposefully having sex, specifically anal sex, unprotected. They are calling it "barebacking", "raw" sex, "bug chasing", or "planting their seed". In addition, they are publicly declaring that their intent is to conduct their sex lives with openness and freedom and to not give much attention or credence to the "preaching" of the "condom nazis", as the

AIDS service organizations are becoming known.

But there is a greater issue here. At times, the discussion seems to centre around the level of self-destructiveness on the part of some gay men, while endeavouring to place a good deal of the responsibility on the shoulders of the AIDS service organizations. Attempts are made to focus some of the "blame" on the lack of cohesion in our community structures causing young gay men to feel isolation at being on the outside of a community that has seemingly embraced the HIV/AIDS culture.

Frankly, this phenomenon is causing us a great deal of concern. Some of the questions we at ANE are asking ourselves is how do we deal with it? What changes do we make to our programming to specifically address the perceived desire and resulting benefits to being HIV-positive? How do we convince our young people that contracting HIV and living out the rest of one's life on an ever-changing cocktail of protease inhibitors is not an attractive alternative to living negative? Not to mention the regime of other medications that are required to keep one's equilibrium in balance. How do we emphasize the undeniable truth that a cure has not been found?

There are many questions and few answers in effectively addressing changes in attitude toward a virus that has had us running frightened for almost two decades. Young men are declaring themselves invulnerable and living a life that borders on carelessness, often mixing drugs and alcohol with unprotected sexual activity. This

attitude toward their perceived immunity tells the AIDS service organizations that the message has not been received. Our programming, the medium and the message all need to be revamped to hit our target directly. The bigger question is how?

ANE has made a commitment to focus its efforts in health promotion specifically on youth. That is not to say that the other at risk populations are being ignored, but youth are the core element to all of these populations. Women, intravenous drug users, the Aboriginal population, street workers and gay men all get their first taste of life as youth. It is our youth that must be convinced that HIV is here, it is mutating into a stronger and more resistant virus, and it is passed on through risk-taking in our daily lives, not exceptional circumstances, but daily activity. There is no clearer message; yet it is a message that seems to be lost in the telling.

We have also to convince our gay population to take some pride in ourselves and in our community. By becoming actively involved in creating a social environment that promotes self-acceptance and self-esteem, and by focusing our efforts on establishing an identity separate and apart from HIV/AIDS, we can hopefully reverse the historical analogy of HIV and old gay men. A growing trend in the young gay population is one that has equated being HIV-positive with acceptance, freedom of sexual expression and a final release from the angst of maintaining a negative status. In doing so, the target is reaching beyond the traditional programming and message of HIV prevention programs. The existing network of programs that have been aimed at men are no longer adequate.

There are some very important questions being raised, and the AIDS Network will

need some help in addressing them. While ANE steers its programming toward the greater at risk populations, we must not lose sight of the fact that the gay community needs to rethink the way it is defining this virus and the ever-changing catalogue of drugs that are supposedly keeping it under control. As stated above, a cure has not been found, in fact, the very tools that are now responsible for giving our loved ones a fighting chance at a longer and more active life, are the direct cause of our need for increased vigilance. The drugs are mutating the virus and it no longer even resembles its older sibling.

I have attempted to give some local perspective to what is becoming an important discussion. I do not have the answers, nor do I claim to even understand all of the issues involved; however, I am cognisant of the dangers that face us if we do not address this dilemma head on. ANE welcomes any input you may have in this discussion. We cannot effectively take on these pockets of real concern unless we have the community involved. Please forward your ideas and contributions to this debate to Deborah Foster, Program Director or to myself at AIDS Network of Edmonton Society, #201 11456 Jasper Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta T5K 0M1 or by email at ane@freenet.edmonton.ab.ca or fax at 488-3735. Finally, you could simply call us at 488-5742.

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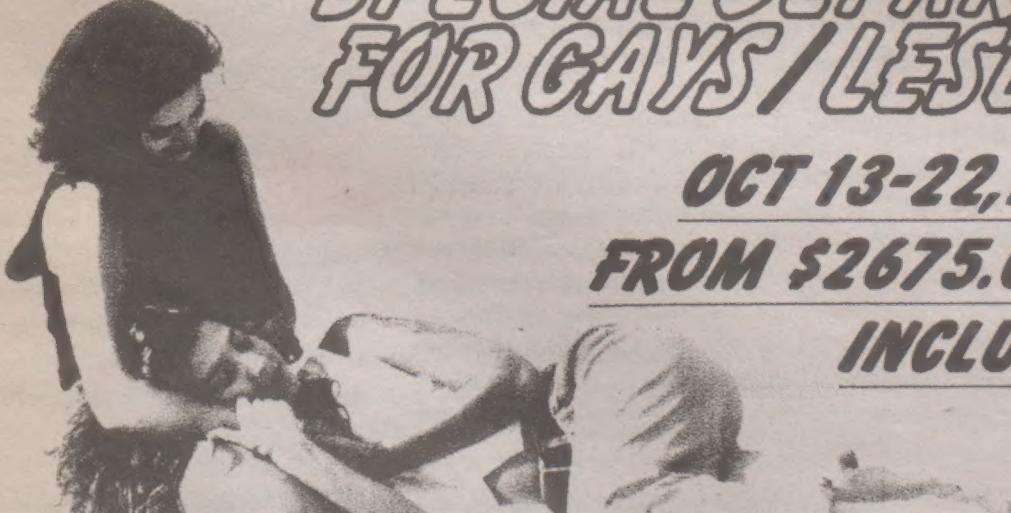
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Pride! Pride! Pride!

By Michael Phair

It's coming! Pride Week in Edmonton will arrive in mid-June from June 12th to the 19th! Year after year as summer comes, I start to get excited about Pride Week. At the recent meeting of the local Pride organizing committee, I was suddenly struck with how many years I have attended Pride events and/or helped to organize them.

In the early 80's, Pride Day, Week, Month was organized through GATE—the Gay Alliance Toward Equality (and yes, it has been a 'day', a 'week or two', and even a 'month' in different years!). Every year that I can remember, recruiting enough volunteers to organize Pride has been a challenge, raising enough money has been very difficult and getting out the information early enough and to places where people will see it has been a real headache! Many years there have been big fights over the theme, design of the poster, kind of events to be included and how 'political' Pride should be. But, each year, the work gets done and events take place and I, with hundreds of others, have a great time being proud!

I remember great dances at the Oddfellows, the Phoenix Hall and Bonnie Doon Hall. At a couple of those dances, I was responsible for cleaning up and returning liquor and I have fond memories of driving the streets of Edmonton at 4 or 5 a.m. with a station wagon packed with cases of beer, wine, gin and vodka—thank goodness Edmonton's finest never stopped me! We had panels at the University of Alberta, with guest speakers and entertainers like David Sereda, that we brought in for concerts at the old Theatre Network space near the Coliseum. I also recall films, oftentimes shorts, that were brought in by gay and lesbian filmmakers—some of them even Canadian. A couple of years, there were 'coffee houses' with local talent, poetry reading and one act plays. I even read a couple of 'gay' poems from a Japanese anthology about a guy on his motorcycle—hot and steamy! And almost every year that I recall was the question of how, and who would deal with the media. Always we worried

that the 'right' message needed to get out to the citizens of Edmonton and were afraid that the only thing that would get focused on was the 'Queens'. And, of course, every year there were great pictures of the queen in all the media—thank god for all the great queens in our community!

And most exciting for me is that around '88 or '89, Pride organized a public rally as part of the week in the downtown space south of the Library. The few years that we did this were great—a public face for lesbians and gay men in Edmonton. Of course, this was only the first step to a PARADE! I was part of the Pride Committee that organized the first parade that gathered at the gazebo in Old Strathcona and went TWO blocks down Whyte Avenue. When the day came, I was terribly nervous—none of us knew whether anyone besides the organizers would actually show up and a parade of 15 did not sound like much fun. As I rounded the corner to Gazebo Park, there were a couple of hundred people, trucks, banners and costumes. I was stunned and thrilled and soooo excited that I nearly wet myself! Maureen Irwin and I led the parade that year, and it was one of the best times I ever had—gave me enough energy that I went out and won a city election the next year!

And it is PARADE time for 1999. Mark your calendars, as the big day is Saturday, June 19, the last proud day of Pride 99. In the afternoon, the Rainbow Business Association will host a business and craft fair at the Hellenic Hall on 116th Street and 105th Avenue. The PARADE will convene at Grant Notley Park (116 Street and 100 Avenue) at 5:30 PM. We will march down 100 Ave., cross Jasper and end up at the Oliver Pool and Community Hall where PFLAG will sponsor a picnic. Later that evening will be the mixed dance to close down the festivities! I am sure many of you remember our last parade (it rained BIG TIME), but this year we guarantee great weather. So come and join the PARADE on June 19!

(Michael Phair is Councillor for Ward 4. He can be reached at 496-8146 (phone), 496-8113 (fax), e-mail: michael.phair@gov.edmonton.ab.ca.)



Unequal Alberta

By Gary Dickson Liberal MLA

There have been a lot of developments around the issue of same sex benefits and unequal treatment of Albertans. It may be useful take stock of what has happened and what is likely to happen over the next couple of months.

In the current session of the Legislative Assembly, the Klein government introduced Bill 12, the *Domestic Relations Amendment Act*. This bill responded to an Alberta Court of Appeal decision that required the law to be changed to provide someone living in a common-law relationship with the right to seek an order for support or protection in the event of separation. The *Domestic Relations Act* currently only provides remedies to a husband or wife in a legal marriage situation. However, Bill 12 only responds to the court's ruling and does not deal with underlying issues such as rights for same sex couples and heterosexual common law couples.

The Alberta Liberal Caucus has argued that this bill is too narrow and fails to recognize the reality that many Albertans live in same sex relationships and ought to be entitled to the same kind of benefits and protection as married spouses. Alberta Liberals have gone further and have distributed a set of amendments that would allow same sex partners the same protection as opposite sex partners. The Liberal amendments provide for anyone living in a common-law relationship to use the remedies and protections afforded by the *Domestic Relations Act*. A common-law relationship would be defined as any two adults who either enter into a very simple contract that would provide that either party could make application under the Act or who simply live together for at least 3 consecutive years. In addition to same sex couples, this would also include other long term mutually supportive relationships such as 2 adult sisters or a mother and her adult son.

Alberta Liberals are opposed to a "registered domestic partnership". This is the model used in Denmark and has been advocated by Reform MP Ian McClelland. Why should same sex partners be required to go to a government office like Vital Statistics and fill out forms that would become part of the public record? We prefer the more discreet and private approach of entering into a simple contract. The contract could be a schedule to the Act. The form of the contract could be accessed through the Internet or from any local stationery store, just like a Transfer of Land form. In a province like Alberta there may be many living in same sex relationships that would not feel comfortable making a public declaration to qualify as a registered domestic partnership.

The Klein government has announced that, at some point in the future, it will look at the notion of a registered domestic relationship but that it will not bring in any changes to Bill 12 to deal with same sex partners. It is widely expected that the government is simply waiting for the Supreme Court of Canada to announce its decision in the M v. H. case on whether a same sex couple can access the support provisions of the Ontario Family Law Act. This will likely require that laws like Bill 12 must be further amended to deal with same sex relationships. No matter what the Supreme Court of Canada decides, Alberta Liberals believe that changes to provincial legislation are necessary to provide equal treatment to all Albertans.

The government's piecemeal approach will force heterosexual common law and same sex couples to undertake costly fights in the courts. Alberta Liberals believe that it is unacceptable to abdicate the leadership role we expect from

the Legislative Assembly and leave the task of human rights protections to private individuals, their lawyers and the courts.



Spring Legislature Update and the Domestic Relations Act

By Laurie Blakeman - Liberal MLA

The Legislature is now half way through the spring sitting and, as promised, my colleagues and I in the Liberal caucus have been vigilant on behalf of the people of Alberta.

A number of bills have already passed third reading. These are bills, which the Liberals agree are needed, useful and welcomed by the communities they affect. Bills include Dairy Industry Act, Agricultural Financial Services, Surface Rights, Survey Amendment Act, Child Welfare Amendment Act, and Provincial Court Judges Act.

Bill 19, the Appropriation Act also passed, although with considerably less enthusiasm on my part. This bill approves up to 30% of next year's budget to be spent. I disagree with the passing of this bill when we have not scrutinized and debated over half the departments. In effect, permission is now granted to spend a lot of money that the Legislature has not been able to question.

I'm sure everyone followed the controversy over Bill 12, the Domestic Relations Act. The bill has not completed all stages of the debate yet but the Premier is indicating that they will not allow inclusion of same sex couples under the act.

The Liberals, working closely with Equal=Alberta developed a good amendment for the act which would have defined common law as two people who have lived together for a specific

period of time or who have a child of the union or who have signed a contract together. The conservatives have admitted that it is a good amendment and that they will consider it in the future. We will bring this amendment forward during the appropriate stage of debate and will fight hard for it to be passed. The Liberal Caucus is united in this effort.

One bill, which continues to gather attention, is Bill 15, the Natural Heritage Act. This is a giant step backward in preserving and protecting our wilderness areas, parks, and heritage sites. Essentially, this bill would allow logging, gas and oil activity and other industry to take place in our most vulnerable areas. The bill has been condemned by every group that has studied it, including the government's own Law Institute. Stay tuned.

Other bills, which are upcoming and may be included in the 'fences committee' supervision, include the Employment Pensions Plan Amendment Act. This act covers Alberta's 1200 registered private pension plans and applies to 200,000 employees. I'm interested in this to see if survivor pensions can be amended to include same sex couples. As with the Domestic Relations Act, all we are attempting to do is to allow people to take responsibility for their own lives. Right now, in many

regulated pension plans, a person is not allowed to designate a same sex spouse to receive the 'survivor' portion of the pension.

Once again this does not allow a gay or lesbian access to a remedy or redress that is available to a straight person. Although I have raised it in debate repeatedly, the Conservatives do not seem to see the hypocrisy of putting more responsibility in the hands of individuals but exempting one group from this same responsibility. Having not seen the act yet, and we don't know if they are dealing with the section we are interested in amending. If it is not 'opened up' we cannot amend it. In other words, if that section of the original bill is not being dealt with in the amendment act then we're out of luck this time.

Keep the letters and emails coming folks. Every letter and email helps us persuade the government and the public that these issues need to be addressed.

During session I am only in the constituency office on Fridays but you can call me at the Legislature at 427-2292 or call the constituency office at: 414-0743 or write 10042-100 St. T5K 1V6 or email blakeman@oanet.com

**Laurie Blakeman MLA
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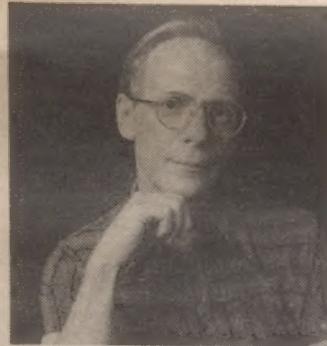
By Murray Billett

I look around Edmonton's Gay and Lesbian community and I am filled with tremendous pride. So many have worked long and hard to accomplish the many success stories within our community. I have been involved in a number of groups and organizations over the last number of years. There are hundreds of men and women who have dedicated themselves to make our community and our city a better place to live. I have worked beside many of these volunteers in a number of capacities. I know how difficult it can be to be "out" and involved. It can be very much a challenge for those involved. They continue to prove that discrimination hinders coming out, but coming out hinders discrimination. The part that I feel particularly proud about is the growth in activism in the last year. GALA (Gay and Lesbian Awareness) was

formally ended last year. Equal= Alberta was formed with a large group of individuals that have done an amazing job in successfully launching the new and improved political organization here in Edmonton. There have been so many people that have influenced my personal participation over the years. There are many that I would like to personally thank. The numbers are too great to mention in this article. You know who you are. You know who the "organizers" and volunteers are here in Edmonton - you do us proud! Thank you for your efforts!!

I, too, have been very proud to be one of the many foot soldiers who have worked together in pride. I am honored to have had the opportunity to stand up as an unapologetically gay man in our city. The time has come for me to step away from my years of volunteer work the GLBT community. I wish to thank the many individuals who have supported GALA and other projects I have worked on. There are many new and exciting events and issues that have to be dealt with. Equal=Alberta and all the other groups that count on your support are always in need of volunteers. As I move onto other areas of interests I encourage each of you to take some time for "your" community. Those of you that continue to be involved I wish you much luck and continued success and to everyone in the GLBT and their Supporters. The very best in following your rainbow.

Murray



From the Editor

by Dennis Cambly

organizations arguing amongst themselves, as to who is right. Amongst all the fire, it appears that we are our own worst enemies. Why are we picking on each other when the real enemy is working on destroying our lives? Klein is no friend to the gay and lesbian community, so how about venting a little of your anger in that direction. Don't let the gay "fluffy" papers lead you astray, because they continuously flaunt pictures of this tormentor of souls.

If you would like to do something more constructive, then you can get involved in helping out with Pride Week. It is going to be special this year by the virtue of the number of people who have been dedicating time and energy since late last year. Nope, you do not get paid, but you will certainly find people who will tell you what "you" should have done!

As to those who wish to bitch about things not going their way, they are usually people who do nothing but complain anyway. They are the ones who would never spend one minute of volunteer time within any community group. Some have forgotten that Times .10 is an all volunteer operation, for example. Now in our sixth year where

hundreds of people have spent thousands of hours getting every issue ready. I have not taken any kind of holiday in those six years. Many of our volunteers are typically people whom you might not see around the scene since they are holding full time work and volunteering on their own time. For the most part, they still leave a little bit of time to have something of a personal life.

It does get a little disheartening when the snipers fire at people who stay dedicated and involved. To all of you who work to keep your business doors open, who still find time to support local efforts, who show genuine care about the people of our community, keep the faith! To those who dedicate yourselves to your local and regional community groups and help them grow, keep the faith! There is a shadow of jealousy disguised as homophobia created by "out" gays against the "closet" gays/lesbians. Those who stand on the front lines are the easiest targets. If you stay involved, then expect the "fluff" to do whatever they can to destroy your good work. Homophobia is not something exclusive to the straight world. The closet gay will make many sordid remarks about what the gays are up to around his/her straight friends. These

remarks are made to cover up their own true identity and throw their straight friends off course. They are terrified that someone might know and thus become the target of all the remarks they have made. Some of them do make their way into the gay community, but the name they use with us is not the same one they use at work.

I suppose that we could start a column of "outings" for each issue. Just a thought for you as you keep flapping your lips...

Why do we bother doing all of this anyway? To give the gays and lesbians still living in our community a way to keep in touch and learn of safe places to meet others. Whether it be through a community service group or via one of the businesses who support Times .10. We are all around you... if you could but perceive... And no, we are not funded by any group in Toronto as are some others in this province. Please give a thank you to everyone who supports Times .10 Non-Profit Publications Society, because that is what we are!!

So You Want to Volunteer?

"Volunteering is like a tree full of monkeys, all on different limbs at different levels. Some monkeys are climbing up, some down. The monkeys on top look down and see a tree full of smiling faces. The monkeys on the bottom look up and see nothing but assholes."

How was that for a good way of starting the commentary for April '99. Six years later and it is finally time to let you, the "big mouths", know where you are currently at in our community. There sure are a lot of feelings being hurt around our Capital City lately. Not quite sure why some folks are biting so hard on the bit. Businesses using sniper fire to hit at volunteer organizations,

Homophobia: Society stands accused of murder in Wyoming

By Christopher Leland

The cyclist who found him said that at first he thought it was a scarecrow. I imagine Matthew Shepard there, bound to a fence on the dusty Wyoming plain in the middle of autumn: beaten, burned and left to die. The local sheriff suggested the motive was robbery, as if it were common in Wyoming for a mugger to burn and bind and pistol-whip someone before stealing his wallet. That Shepard was a gay man apparently did not enter into the sheriff's calculus.

The assailants, like Shepard himself, were hardly more than boys—21 and 22—and yet acted with the refined sadism of trained torturers. What was most remarkable, said the reporter on the evening news, was how "average" Shepard's tormentors were, just "small-town normal." To this I would say yes, just average, just small-town normal—and full of a hatred and loathing that could make them take a young man not much different from themselves and subject him to crimes like those in the Balkans that make us shudder. One of the young men, according to his girlfriend, had been humiliated because Shepard "flirted" with him, sufficiently so, it appears, that he and his friend would indulge in murder.

The concrete guilt for this crime is theirs, and they will pay the price. But for the roots of what transformed them into monsters that chilly October night, we need not look very far. I accuse Wyoming, which over the years refused to institute hate-crime laws. Its governor only now sees the need to press vigorously for such protections. State legislators once compared gay men to bulls who failed to stud and hence were better consigned to the slaughterhouse.

I accuse state governments in general, beginning with that of my home state of Michigan, which in its own hate-crime legislation of 1989 removed sexual orientation as a protected category and has rejected repeated attempts to reinstate such language. Gov. John Engler has continually reiterated his view that any amendment to the present law is not needed. The Legislature has, in remarkable pettiness, reduced university budgets by precisely the cost of those universities' "domestic partner" benefits. I accuse the more than three-quarters of

willfully blind high school administrators who responded to a poll about protections for gay and lesbian students by saying they "had no gay or lesbian students." Teachers and coaches mouth antigay slurs with no thought as to their implications and ignore such slurs when repeated by students. The president of Michigan State University, rather than voicing his outrage after the appearance of the graffiti "I kill fags" on campus, issued a lukewarm statement unlikely to raise an eyebrow on fraternity row.

I accuse the American military. Colin Powell, himself beneficiary of policies which flew in the face of 200 years of racism in the armed forces, nonetheless defended policies discriminating against the thousands of gay and lesbian service people who have served and continue to serve their country honorably. Officers

ignore even the weak-kneed policy that is "don't ask, don't tell" and continue to hound gays and lesbians out of the service. I accuse the U.S. Supreme Court, which in 1987 determined that the State of Georgia could snoop in its citizens' bedrooms. It repeatedly refuses to hear the appeals from lower courts regarding "don't ask, don't tell." Just last week it upheld a Cincinnati ordinance that forbids any city action to protect the rights of its gay and lesbian citizens.

I accuse Congress and leaders such as Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott and House Speaker Newt Gingrich, who compare the mysteries of human desire to kleptomania and alcoholism. I accuse the president who, despite his support for gays and lesbians, carefully calibrates such support to the perceived political winds.

I accuse, most emphatically, religious leaders, from local preachers to Pat Robertson to the pope, whose reactionary, partial and often incorrect readings of Scripture have given spiritual sanction to discrimination and hatred against gays and lesbians. I accuse the American people. They are so insecure about their own sexuality, desires and bodies that they do not demand respect and full citizenship for their gay and lesbian fellows. They buy the logic that gay rights are "special rights"—such rights as a job, a house, the freedom to feel safe in one's home and to love whom one pleases.

To those who would deny such accusations, I ask: What have you done to counter the homophobia that threads its way through this culture? What letter did you write? What march did you take part in? What money or time did you contribute? What joke did you refuse to laugh at? When did you confront your legislator, your pastor, your brother-in-law, your daughter about some egregious, wrong-headed or hateful remark? To see the consequences of your complacency, your willful inattention, your own bigotry, look no further than that windswept plain outside Laramie. Look upon that battered face, bowed head, tortured body lashed to timbers there in the wind. Behold the man. This is what you have wrought.

(Christopher Leland of Detroit is an author and an English professor at Wayne State University. Reprinted with permission)

Groups that promote hatred and homophobia under the guise of "family values"

You can do a lot to change the way people think by educating them to the *hateful* agenda behind organizations that hide beneath the innocuous banner of "family values."

American Family Association (Head: Donald Wildmon)

Promotes the "agenda" through court actions; also targets media/entertainment industry. Concerns include homosexuality, pornography, profanity, "anti-Christian bigotry," liberal media. Influential on National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) funding and public school curricula censorship. 600,000 members, 640 local chapters.

Concerned Women Of America (Head: Beverly LaHaye)

Anti-gay, anti-abortion, "pro-family" agenda via grassroots organizing and Congressional lobbying. Pressures elected officials via local groups ("prayer chains"). 600,000 members, 800 US chapters.

Eagle Forum (Head: Phyllis Schlafly)

A women's organization powerful in national and Republican party politics thanks to Phyllis Schlafly, founder. Mother of a gay man, she opposes AIDS education, sex education, daycare, family leave, abortion rights, the ERA, and NEA funding. 80,000 members.

Family Research Council (Head: Gary Bauer)

Lobbies against G/L/B civil rights, reproductive freedom, government-funded health care, child care and equal protection laws for women in the workplace. Says lifting the military ban on gays will dramatically increase AIDS incidence. Not the same as Paul Cameron's **Family Research Institute**. Split from **Focus on the Family** in 1992.

EDMONTON RAINBOW BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

General Meeting
Tuesday, April 13th

At the AIDS Network
Edmonton Boardroom
#201, 11456 - Jasper Ave
7:00 P.M. - 8:30 P.M.

Luncheon Meeting - Sunday,
April 11th, Pride 99
Fundrasier
Secrets, 10249-107 Street
11:00 - 3:00 P.M.

Focus On the Family (Head: James Dobson)

Employs almost 1,000. 1,550 radio stations worldwide. A leader in the passage of Colorado's Amendment 2 to disallow equal rights for G/L/B. Conducts seminars nationally to involve fundamentalists in political process.

Traditional Values Coalition (Head: Rev. Lou Sheldon)

Opposes gay rights, reproductive freedom, teaching evolution, and sex education except abstinence. Newest group is **National Task Force for the Preservation of the Heterosexual Ethic in America**. Active in DC, OR, and CA to outlaw civil rights protections for G/L/B people. Now organizing anti-gay ballot initiatives in California and elsewhere. Helped repeal G/L rights in Irvine and Concord, CA. Advocates AIDS quarantine. 25,000 Churches nationally.

Free Congress Foundation (Head: Paul Weyrich)

A research/education organization. Formed **National Empowerment Television (NET)** to mobilize Right for grassroots lobbying. Hopes to expand to cable TV. Operates **Judicial Selection Monitoring Project**. Has four TV shows including two to target black conservatives and college campuses.

Operation Rescue (Head: Randall Terry)

Nationally known for violent shut-downs of abortion clinics and vandalizing property, terrorizing women and health-care providers including stalking, harassment, and other intimidation tactics. Trains activists. Added gay rights to agenda when Clinton proposed to lift the military ban. 35,000 + members.

Chalcedon (Head: Rousas John Rushdoony)

Principle center of the **Christian Reconstruction Movement**. Leader in establishing Christian legal organizations and a major think tank, publisher, speakers bureau, and seminar presenter.

National Association Of Christian Educators/Citizens For Excellence In Education (Head: Dr. Robert L. Simonds)

Goal is to bring public education under Christian control. Priority is disruption of public schools via attacks on curricula, textbooks, and school boards. 1,250 chapters.

In addition to those listed above, the **Christian Coalition**, the **Oregon and Idaho Citizens Alliances**, and **Colorado for Family Values** are all organizations that abuse the true meaning of family.

(From P-FLAG)

Sexual Orientation - Definitions

Homophobia is defined as the irrational fear of homosexuals, homosexuality, or any behavior, belief, or others which does not conform to rigid sex role stereotypes. It is this fear that enforces sexism as well as heterosexism.

Homophobic Levels of Attitude

1. Repulsion

Homosexuality is seen as a crime against nature. Gays/lesbians are sick, crazy, immoral, sinful, wicked, etc. Anything is justified to change them: prison, hospitalization, negative behavior therapy, violence, etc.

2. Pity

Heterosexual chauvinism. Heterosexuality is more mature and certainly to be preferred. Any possibility of becoming "straight" should be reinforced, and those who seem to be born that way should be pitied.

3. Tolerance

Homosexuality is just a phase of adolescent development that many people go through and most people grow out of. Thus, gays/lesbians are less mature than heterosexuals and should be treated with the protectiveness and indulgence one uses with a child. Gays and lesbians should not be given positions of authority because they are still working through their adolescent behavior.

4. Acceptance

Still implies there is something to accept. Characterized by such statements as "you're not a lesbian, you're a person" or "what you do is your own business" or "it's fine with me, just don't flaunt it".

Positive Levels of Attitude

5. Support

Work to safeguard the rights of lesbians and gays. People at this level may be uncomfortable themselves, but they are aware of the homophobic climate and irrational unfairness.

6. Admiration

Acknowledges that being gay/lesbian in our society takes strength. People at this level are willing to truly examine their homophobic attitudes, values, and behaviors.

7. Appreciation

Value the diversity of people and see gays/lesbians as a valid part of that diversity. These people are willing to combat homophobia in themselves and others.

8. Nurturance

Assumes that gay/lesbian people are indispensable in our society. They view gays/lesbians with genuine affection and delight and are willing to be allies and advocates.

The Riddle Homophobia Scale. Taken from: Wall, V. Beyond Tolerance: Gays, lesbians and bisexuals on campus. A handbook of structured experiences and exercises for training and development. American College Personnel Association.

Be a Role Model. Make it clear that there is nothing wrong with being gay or lesbian

Equality for All:

A Position Paper on Same Sex Issues

New Democrat Opposition

The New Democrat Opposition is pleased to outline its position on the legal equality of gay and lesbian Albertans. The public response to the Delwin Vriend decision, and the stormy debate that has erupted since the Domestic Relations Amendment Act (Bill 12) was introduced attest to the fact that this is a deeply contentious issue on which Albertans have sincerely held and widely divergent opinions. We hope this position paper makes a positive contribution to bridging the wide gulf of misunderstanding that surrounds this issue.



This paper is in response to both the Ministerial Task Force Report of March 3, 1999 as well as the introduction of the *Domestic Relations Amendment Act, 1999*. It discusses many of the broad policy issues that governments face in dealing with the legal status of gays, lesbians and same sex couples.

Spousal and Child Support

Bill 12, the Domestic Relations Amendment Act, legally defines common law relationships as exclusively heterosexual. This has sparked broader debate about the issue of spousal and maintenance obligations and their relation to same sex couples. Far from granting "special rights," Alberta's gay and lesbian community is demonstrating its willingness to accept the same obligations and duties, in terms of spousal and child support, as are imposed upon opposite sex couples.

Defining common law spouses as exclusively heterosexual would not legally oblige the breadwinner of a same sex couple to support the other should a relationship end. Individuals leaving same sex relationships may not have the financial means to support themselves and their children or other dependents. By refusing to legally recognize their relationships, the government is putting Alberta taxpayers on the hook. Therefore, the public treasury has to pay costs incurred in the form of welfare or other social benefits, rather than legally requiring the one spouse to support the other.

Marriage and Divorce

The *Marriage Act* and the *Divorce Act* are federal legislation. The province only has jurisdiction over who may solemnize a marriage. It is important to note that marriage is a civil arrangement through which two people publicly commit to support each other and any dependent children.



On what grounds can we justify restricting this institution and the civil and societal role of marriage to heterosexual couples only? The civil nature of marriage is crucial to determining the rights and obligations of those involved in these relationships. There are over 60 pieces of legislation in Alberta that create consequences for being a spouse. Excluding gay and lesbian Albertans from the institution of marriage by definition excludes them from rights and obligations ranging from family law to taxation and inheritance rights.

For many Albertans, there is also religious and historical significance attached to the institution of marriage. Some Alberta churches perform same sex marriages, thereby giving them religious sanction. Others refuse to do so as is their right.

Changing the definition of who can be married does not weaken marriage, but strengthens it by making it more accessible and relevant to the reality of today's families. The fact is that many same sex couples live together in loving and stable relationships. It is time for civil marriage law to catch up and to allow those churches and marriage commissioners who wish to do so, to give legal sanction to same sex unions.

The Adoption and Fostering of Children

Children are universally recognized as being simultaneously the key to our society's future and deserving of special protection in government policy. The paramount consideration against which all policy must be measured is the best interest of Alberta's children. The policy recommendations in this paper are fully consistent with what we view as the best interests of children.

The conclusions of recent studies on gay parenting are clear. Gay men and lesbian women are just as capable as heterosexual men and women of being caring, nurturing and affirming parents.¹ By not allowing gay and lesbian Albertans to foster and adopt children, the government is automatically, arbitrarily and unjustifiably excluding a

significant sector of the population from assisting in the raising of children. Concerning their fitness as parents, same sex couples should be judged on the same criteria as opposite sex couples.

Despite the legal obstacles, the reality is that children are being raised by same sex couples. By not recognizing these families as legitimate and socially acceptable, the government runs the risk of being accused of stigmatizing both the parents and the children of these relationships.

By legally recognizing and allowing same sex couples to adopt and to foster children, the government can serve children better. For example, if an individual with children from a previous marriage enters into a loving, caring and stable same sex relationship, the children should be able to be adopted by the stepparent. Allowing this would legally recognize already-existing loving relationships. On a practical level, it would ensure that all normal parental obligations, such as child support and maintenance, would have to be met by the new, non-biological parent as well.

Employee and Pension Benefits

Employment Pensions

The *Alberta Employment Pension Plans Act*, which governs private sector pension plans, currently prohibits the extension of certain pension benefits to anyone other than married or common law spouses. Should one of the partners in a same sex relationship die, these pension benefits cannot be accessed by their surviving partner. This is especially unfair because an employee "purchases" those pension benefits with his or her own money, often supplemented with contributions from their employer.

Like opposite sex couples, same sex couples are often in relationships where one partner financially depends on the other. Preventing the one partner of a same sex couple from receiving the pension of the other cannot be justified. By not allowing pension benefits to be available to the same sex spouses of deceased workers, the province may expose itself to further financial expense by having to provide for a surviving partner who is left in financial need. The government's current approach lacks both compassion and fiscal common sense.

Other Employment Benefits

In addition to pension benefits, employers and employees contribute to various other benefit plans including life, disability, dental and extended health. The federal government, most provincial and territorial governments, many municipalities, school boards, colleges, universities and private sector employers already treat employees equally whether they

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the
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454-6552
12212 - 107 Avenue
Edmonton, AB T5M 4A8

are in opposite sex or same sex relationships.

Experience in other jurisdictions has shown that the additional expense involved in extending benefits to cover employees in same sex relationships is minimal. The Alberta Government should move immediately to extend employment benefits to the same sex partners of its employees.

Recommendations

Same sex couples should be given the same legal status as opposite sex couples living in common law relationships. Discrimination against same sex couples in Alberta's statutes should be eliminated.

The *Employment Pension Plans Act* should be amended to provide spouses in same sex relationships with the same pension benefits as are currently available to heterosexual couples.

The Alberta Government should, on a non-discriminatory basis, move immediately to make any necessary changes to extend employment benefits to the same sex partners of its employees.

Legislation, regulations and policies governing the adoption and fostering of children should be changed to eliminate discrimination against same sex couples.

Conclusion

New Democrats, both federally and provincially, have long opposed discrimination and affirmed the importance of basic human rights. New Democrats believe there is no justifiable reason to discriminate against persons with a same sex orientation and to exclude them from the equal rights and obligations imposed by law. Everyone has the right to be judged on the integrity of their character and beliefs, not on the basis of their personal characteristics including their sexual orientation. Efforts to ensure the legal equality of persons with a same sex orientation are no different than earlier efforts to ensure the equality of women and to end discrimination based on race or other characteristics.

Submitted by,

Pam Barrett, Leader
Alberta New Democrats

Raj Pannu, MLA
Edmonton Strathcona

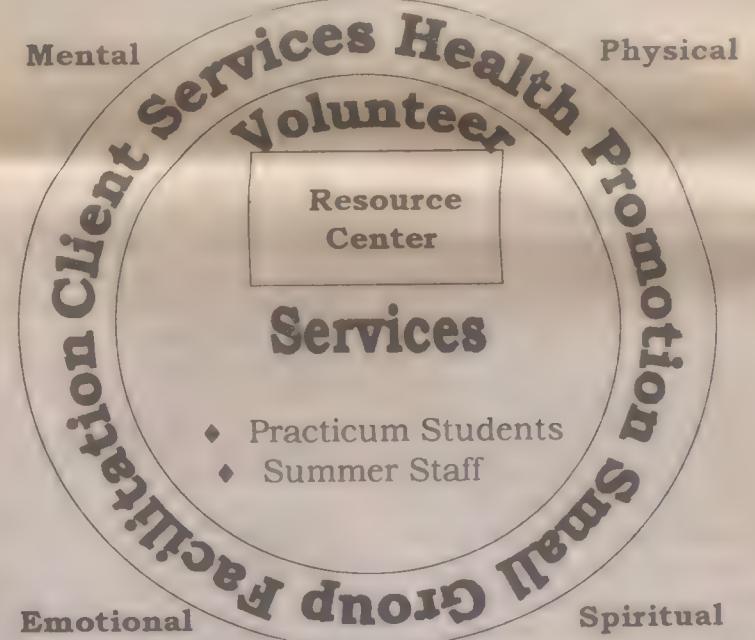
¹ Warneke, Lorne Dr. "Bridging Research and Policy: Gay Men and Lesbians as Foster Parents." This is Part Three of a report submitted to the Hon. Dr. Lyle Oberg, Minister of Family and Social Services on September 17, 1997. Warneke cites several studies showing that gay or lesbian individuals are just as likely to show positive parenting characteristics as heterosexual people.



AIDS Network Update

By Deborah Foster, B.Sc., M.Sc.,
Program Manager

For those of you who have been reading Times 10 over the last few months, you will have recognized that the AIDS Network of Edmonton Society has been going through a period of transition. A number of new staff have come on and others will be starting over the next few months. The AIDS Network is also changing how it works. Below is a diagram illustrating the new look of the Program Department. We have gone from Support and Education Departments to a more circular concept, including Client Services, Small Group Facilitation, and Health Promotion. We believe this holistic way of working better represents the type of work we are doing and plan to do. The wheel is based on the principles of wellness and looks at four aspects of health. Health promotion will be targeting the following populations: aboriginal, women, HIV+ people, intravenous drug users, at risk youth, men who have sex with men, and corrections. One of the projects in the men who have sex with men area will be related to staying negative in the 90's and feeling good about it. Also underlying the work that we will be doing is best practice harm reduction strategies and a strengthening our community involvement, community linkages, and grassroots work. As the new Program Manager I am very excited about all the changes.



The Resource Center is also changing in the hopes of becoming more user friendly. As part of the change, a working group has been struck and they are asking the community to give input on the center. Similar questions are also being posed around Volunteer Services. Over the next few months, an evaluative component will be put into place in all our programming. This is a very brief synopsis of some of the current goings on; stay tuned for further updates. Feel free to give us a call with your input.

Jann Arden has graciously donated her time for a concert at Alberta College on April 17th to raise money to ship medical supplies to a neonatal intensive care nursery in Ethiopia. The information is as follows:

An Intimate Evening with Jann Arden
Saturday, April 17th, 1999,
Muttart Hall - Alberta College
Reception (Includes food, wine, silent auction and Jann) 5:30pm, Concert 7:30pm
Only 254 tickets available Price \$100 ea.
All proceeds go to the East Africa Maternal/ Newborn Aid Society

Greater Edmonton Gay Community Support Groups and Services

AIDS Network of Edmonton Society

AIDS Network of Edmonton works cooperatively with all those organizations in Alberta and across the country who are working to help limit the spread of HIV infection. Today the network provides Education, Info-Line, Speakers Bureau, Resource material and various Support groups. If you wish to know more about the Network, call 488-5742. E-mail: anoes@connect.ab.ca.

Affirm United

(United Church of Canada) meets at McDougall United Church 10025 - 101 St. Last Saturday of the month, at 7:30 - 9:30 PM For more info, call: Larry at 429-4269 or Phyllis Tess at 474-0862.

Alberta Pflag

Meets the last Sunday of each month at Knox-Met Church. The Church is located at the corner of 109 Street and 83 Avenue. Meeting time is 2 P.M. Contact Ellen by phone at 465-3057 or by e-mail showrish@compusmart.ab.ca.

Alcoholics Anonymous

A A is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. Call 424-5900 for times and places of Gay and Lesbian meetings.

AXIOS - Edmonton

AXIOS is an international organization of Eastern Orthodox and Eastern-Rite Catholic Gay and Lesbian Christians. Our mandate is to promote a greater understanding of human sexuality and spirituality within the Eastern Christian tradition. The AXIOS monthly newsletter is available via the Internet. Contact Dushan at 454-8449 for more information.

Bare Naked Boys Club of Edmonton - BNBCE

A naturist group of gay men in Edmonton interested in social nudity. This is not a sex club. Men of all ages welcome. Call Fred at 469-7231 for information.

The B.E.A.R.S. of Edmonton

A group for hairy men and their admirers meet the last Friday of the month 9:00pm - 11:00pm at Boots n' Saddle. Or write us at #47, 10024-82nd Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada T6E 1Z3. Our email address is bears@freenet.edmonton.ab.ca

Brethren Mennonite Council

For Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual concerns. This is a support community for gay, lesbian and bisexual Mennonites and friends. Contact Tim at 434-5360 or Garrett

at 423-1725 or e-mail: garrett.epp@ualberta.ca.

Dignity Edmonton

This Edmonton chapter is a support community for gay and lesbian Catholics and friends. Contact Bernard at 451-1794 or Dennis at 482-6845

Edmonton Prime Timers

Prime Timers is a social fraternity for older gay and bisexual men and their friends. The purpose of Prime Timers is to provide an opportunity for mature gay men to fraternize and join together in a program of social activities. Meetings held 2nd Sunday each month at the Unitarian Church at 3:00 p.m. If you would like more information address correspondence to Chairman, Edmonton Prime Timers, Suite 1093, 11444 - 119 Street, Edmonton, T5G 2X6. Contact Peter at 426-7019. E-mail: mercury@planet.eon.net

Edmonton Vocal Minority

A mixed voice chorus joining together in a common love of music and a desire to build a greater spirit of unity and pride in the lesbigay community. If you are interested in singing with EVM or working in the areas of promotion, staging or front of house concerts and events, please contact us at P. O. Box 12091, Main Post Office, T5J 3L2 or telephone 988-4620. E-mail: evm@freenet.edmonton.ab.ca

Equal=Alberta [Edmonton]

Equal=Alberta [Edmonton] is a group of concerned citizens working to ensure gay and lesbian Albertans remain protected under Alberta's Human Rights Legislation and to ensure equal treatment for all Albertans. Call: (780) 488-3234 Fax (780) 482-2855. By Email: equalalberta@hotmail.com or visit our Website: www.freenet.edmonton.ab.ca/gcce/equal.htm

Feather of Hope Aboriginal AIDS Prevention Society

The Feather of Hope was founded on a need to provide AIDS education and support to Native People in Alberta. Through education and the development of communities in partnership, it is hoped that the spread of AIDS will be lessened. We offer training and education programs, as well as support through traditional ways. Volunteers are very important to us, if you can help, or would simply like some more information call 488-5773

Free-To-Be Volleyball Association

The Association aspires to provide opportunities for our community to play volleyball in a supportive atmosphere. There are 4 leagues: 1) Recreational - Contact Rick at 497-7585; 2) Beach (summer) - Contact Rick at 497-7585; 3) Competitive - contact Geoff at 420-6698; 4) Tournament - Contact Andrew at 435-9379. Email : freetobevball@hotmail.com

Gay and Lesbian Community Centre of Edmonton (G.L.C.C.E.)

The centre contributes to the well-being of Edmonton's gay, lesbian and bisexual community through informational, social support services and its social information line. The services offered by the centre include an information line, telephone

referrals, library, and drop-in peer support counselling. Further information is available at 488-3234. E-Mail glcce@freenet.edmonton.ab.ca

Gay Men's Wednesday Coffee Evenings.

At 7:30 p.m. Breadstick Cafe at 10159 - 82 Avenue. This group fosters a safe, comfortable environment for all its participants. At the same time, it discourages attendance solely for sexual relations. Join us to relax, share experiences, and establish friendships. There is no age limit. Tel: 403-463-2098 (Graham) E-mail: gwatts@freenet.edmonton.ab.ca

Gay Men's Outreach Crew (G.M.O.C.)

G.M.O.C. is a peer education initiative for gay/bisexual men that works toward: preventing the spread of HIV amongst men who have sex with men, advocating for healthy lifestyle choices, and addressing social and health concerns by fostering self-esteem and gay positive attitudes. For information on G.M.O.C. workshops and other activities, call our information and contact line at 944-1394 ext 4662.

Illusions Social Club

A social club for Crossdressers, Transsexuals and their supporters. We hold two socials each month, one on the second Thursday and one on the third Saturday. For more information write to Illusions Social Club. Our mailing address is Box 1852, Edmonton, T5K 2P2; or phone 488-3234 (GLCCE) on Tuesday evenings to talk to someone person to person.

Imperial Sovereign Court of the Wild Rose

The mission of the Court is to raise funds for charities and other organizations which either provide direct services to gay and lesbian individuals. Meetings of the Society are held at 8 PM on the last Wednesday of the month at the Garage. Our website is at: <http://www.geocities.com/WestHollywood/5904>

Interfaith Association on AIDS Edmonton

The purpose of this association is to sensitize local faith communities and their leaders to the unique spiritual and emotional needs of those infected by HIV/AIDS. The following faith communities are included: Anglican, Baha'i, Baptist, Beth Shalom Synagogue, Lutheran, Metropolitan Community Church, Roman Catholic, Temple Beth Ora, Ukrainian Catholic, Unitarian and United Churches. Phone 448-1768 for more information. Email: anoes@connect.ab.ca.

Lambda Christian Community Church

We are a non-denominational evangelical Christian church. One of our primary goals is to provide a safe and affirming environment for all who desire to worship God. Lambda Community Church, 11148-84 Avenue (Garneau United Church) Edmonton, T6G 0V8. Call 474-0753. Weekly Sunday service at 7 p.m.

Liaison Committee, The

In June of 1993, Edmonton Police Service and the Gay and Lesbian community for met a liaison to promote an atmosphere of understanding and mutual respect. For more info, call Edmonton Police Service at 423-4567 or contact the committee at 421-2277

Living Positive

Emotional, spiritual and psychological support is available through Living Positive to all

those affected by HIV infection. We offer strong, loving, confidential support. We also meet weekly and share our mutual experiences. Living Positive is entirely directed by and for people who share a common diagnosis of HIV+. Peer counselling, hospital visits and a speakers bureau are also available through our society. Phone 488-5768

Long Yang Club Edmonton Chapter

We are an International organization for Gay-Asians and non-Asians. We are the Worlds largest with chapters in 28 cities and 11 countries. Come and Join US ! Contact us at nivek@planet.eon.net. Or call Kevin at 455-2353.

Lutherans Concerned: Edmonton

We are a spiritual community for lesbian, gay, bisexual and straight people. Lutherans Concerned gathers monthly for worship, sharing, and friendship. We offer individual support and a safe space for our own spiritual questions. Call Mette at 461-5571, or write P.O. Box 11095, Edmonton, AB, T5J 3K4 e-mail: luthconc@freenet.edmonton.ab.ca

Metropolitan Community Church of Edmonton (M.C.C.)

We are a local church within the denomination of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches. Our major focus is to the defranchised of society. The UFMCC allows anyone to feel a part of the Christian Community and to claim our place in God's Universe. Services are open to all. We worship on Sunday evenings at 7:15 at McDougall United Church - South entrance. Please feel free to join us! Call 429-2321 for more information. E-mail: revbev@compusmart.ab.ca

M.C.C. Youth Group

Provides a safe environment for gay/les/bi/trans youth, to express themselves freely, explore sexuality and to experience god's/goddess' healing and wholeness. How we intend to achieve this goal is through social, recreational, educational and cultural activities. We are meeting on Tuesday evening at 7:00 p.m. If you have any further questions please E-mail Pam at pamjoce@telusplanet.net. Our phone number is 423-2321

N.E.O.N : Needing Each Other Now.

This name seems very appropriate for the youth group not to mention how styling it sounds. N.E.O.N focuses on and takes into consideration everything to make an environment that feels safe and comfortable for youth. Currently N.E.O.N meets every Thursday at Jazzberries (10116 - 124th st) between the hours of 8:00 p.m and 10:00 p.m. Please come and join us!! For more information e-mail Marcia at neonneon@hotmail.com

Northern Chaps

Edmonton's Leather - Fetish club for Gay, Lesbian, and straight men and womyn was established six years ago. We strike to educate the rest of the community through workshops, staged demonstrations and events in order to heighten awareness. Northern Chaps meets at Boots & Saddle on the first and

third Friday of each month at 9 PM. For information, phone GLCCE at 488-3234. The e-mail address: geoffw@compusmart.ab.ca

Northern Titans
Northern Titans International Bowling League meets every Saturday, at 5:00pm September to April, at Pins & Cues Bowling & Billiards Centre, Southeast corner of Westmount Shopping Centre, 111 Ave. & 135 St. For more information, please call Garry Billett at (403) 426-6311

Out and Out (O²)
An Outdoor and Recreation Group for Edmonton's Lesbigay Community and their friends. Membership is \$5.00 per calendar year. Free newsletter published bimonthly and available at local gay hangouts. O² Hotline is 988-3132 for activity info., who to contact, how to join etc. Get Involved - Have Fun - Meet New People.

OUTreach
OUTreach is a university-based organization for gays, lesbians and bisexuals interested in an academic atmosphere. Meetings are held every Tuesday at 5:00 p.m. on campus; main floor of the Athabasca hall. Topics vary from week to week. Additional information is available by calling 988-4166. E-mail: outreach@gpu.srv.ualberta.ca

PFLAG-T
Parents, Families, & Friends of Lesbians & Gays. PFLAG promotes the health and well-being of Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual persons, their families and friends through support, education and advocacy. Meetings are held the 3rd Tuesday of the month.. For information contact Lynn at 462-5958 or e-mail: pflag@freenet.edmonton.ab.ca.

Team Edmonton
Team Edmonton - Gay Games Association is set up to provide an opportunity for person interested in participating in the Gay Games through fund raising. If you would like to be involved with Team Edmonton, call Johann at 437-0687.

Youth Understanding Youth
We meet every Saturday from 8 to 10 pm at the Gay and Lesbian Community Centre of Edmonton, Suite 103, 10612-124 Street. A social support group for anyone under the age of 25 years. For more information or the give your input, phone GLCCE at 488-3234 or email: yuyedm@hotmail.com

Visions - Unitarian Church of Edmonton
Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender discussion group. We meet the 4th Wednesday of the month. Call UCE at 454-8073 or Anita at 454-1992. Not necessarily Christian.

Womonspace
The purpose of Womonspace is to foster a positive Lesbian identity among the larger community and ourselves. We hold dances, produce a newsletter and hold other activities. For information phone 482-1794 and visit our Web Page

address is - <http://www.gaycanada.com/womonspace/>

Regional Organizations

Freedom Fort McMurray
A social Support group for Gays/Lesbian/ Bisexual & Transgendered Persons and their friends. For information on upcoming events and inquirings into membership please call our Freedom line (780)799-GAY1 (4291). To speak directly with a welcoming committee member call between 3-6pm on Tuesdays or Thursdays. You may leave a message any other time. Or you may e-mail us at dakota54@telusplanet.net or mail us at "Freedom Fort McMurray c/o Money Mart Suite #1, 9713 Harding St. Fort McMurray, AB T9H 1L2 or visit our web site at www.telusplanet.net/public/dakota54/index.htm

Northern Rainbow Youth
A support group for Highschool students. Our email address is nry13_18@hotmail.com and our web page is www.mhenley.com/ashenry any high school student can get more info by contacting their school guidance counsellor. If you want more info yourself then you can call Crystal at (780)790-0775 at work.

High Level Gay and Lesbian Support Group
The High Level Support Group offers info on suicide prevention, monthly meetings, provincial events, gay organizations, information on a place to meet and free counselling provided by High level mental health for both gay people and parents of gay children. Our web site address is <http://www.geocities.com/westhollywood/park/7702/> or write us at po box 3434, High Level, Alta, T0H-1Z0 or call 403-926-3989

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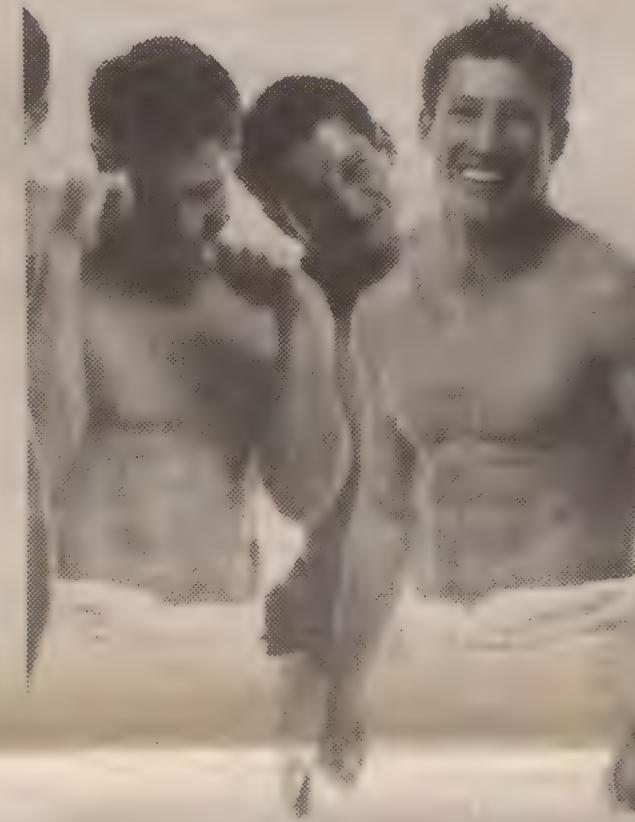
We invite any group in Calgary to join our listings. We will make up a Section just for Calgary.

It is better for all of us if we support what is Alberta owned and operated rather than supporting a phone system that is totally under the control of a Toronto based corporation. Since one "gay" owned media has sold out to Toronto does not mean that all Albertans will sell out. We print this free information and place it in every possible location, so that people dealing with their sexuality, will have a print copy to take home with them.)

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Becoming Ourselves:



Muddling Through

By **Shawn Mooney**

- * Am I gay or bisexual or straight?
- * Do I want to stay in this relationship or would I rather be single right now?
- * I hate my job, but what would I rather be doing?
- * Why am I dreading going home to see my parents next weekend?

These are fairly common problems my clients and I have experienced in our lives. Beneath any such problem lies an uncomfortable feeling: confusion. Each struggle has unique features, but the key question is this: how do I relate to myself when I'm confused? This inner dynamic either promotes or blocks resolution of our external issues.

Many react to confusion by thinking about a problem incessantly. "If only I could think my way through to clarity, this puzzlement would disappear!" Fritz Perls (the founder of Gestalt Therapy) calls this "mind-fucking". Pretending to be clear when we're not, jumping back and forth from one opinion to the next about the problem and not having a clue how we feel about any of them—this is mind fucking. We attempt to find a way out of our dilemma by intellectualizing it to death.

Deeper down in our psyche, another common way to avoid befuddlement is by "blanking out": "I can't tolerate my confusion, so I shut down. I lose partial or total awareness of what's actually going on inside". As kids, "blanking out" probably helped us deal with crap we were incapable of coping with any other way. By the time we're adults, this strategy has gone on automatic pilot: "one moment I'm confused, the next I'm numb."

Our troubles don't disappear when we take action in spite of our confusion:

* I decide I'm gay, but never reckon with my Inner Homophobe

* I leave my lover to sow some wild oats, oblivious to how I've run from intimacy all my life

* I stay in my hateful dead-end job, pissing and moaning about it ad nausea

* I go home to visit the folks periodically, blanking out like a robot every time

The good news is we don't have to live like this. Tolerating, experiencing and moving through onto the other side of our bafflement are inner skills that can be learned. Confusion signals that it's time to shift our focus off whatever drama out there currently vexes us. Now may not be the time to do anything; rather, it is time to be more present with myself.

Tolerating the state of confusion is a crucial first step. Allow the muddle to just be; come to accept that, right now, you feel confused and don't know what to do. This practice of simply being with you and all the chaos ("I choose to be with my confusion for these next fifteen minutes, and I need do nothing but accept and stay with myself") can be deeply meditative.

Sooner or later, tolerance and acceptance breeds insight. Feelings start to come up. (This may be a time to seek some therapy for you, and/or keep a journal for some self-support.) Underneath the externally focused dilemma, you discern conflicting needs and emotions within:

* I love having sex with men, but a voice inside says I'm dirty

* I love my partner, but I also need never to be abandoned by anyone ever again

* I've always wanted to be a professional actor, but my Inner Critic says I'll fail, so I stay at this awful job to keep that voice quiet

* Spending time with my parents makes me regress to the unhappy little girl I once was, whereas when I'm away from them I feel quite mature and happy

Tracing a problem to its intrapsychic root begins a deeper, more conscious journey. As we embrace our inner conflicts and attend to the dialogue between the many parts of ourselves, the splits within begin to heal. We become integrated, more whole. Our solutions and actions begin to emerge from that innermost place where clarity pools. We do not have to respond to confusion with automatic, quick-fix responses; we can choose to recognize the muddle as a clarion call, an invitation inside ourselves.

(A former Edmontonian, **Shawn Mooney** is now a psychotherapist in private practice in Toronto. Watch for Shawn's return to set up his practice in Edmonton this August.

You can reach Shawn at shawn.mooney@sympatico.ca. Web: www3.sympatico.ca/shawn.mooney)

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Five Major Myths about Alcoholics

Myth 1: An alcoholic is the falling-down drunk on skid row.

Answer: Only three percent of the five million estimated alcoholics in the United States are on skid row. Those alcoholics on skid row are undoubtedly in the last stages of the illness. Most people with alcoholism are in the early and middle stages. They have families, they hold regular jobs, they may not appear to be any different from anyone else. The person with alcoholism may be an automobile mechanic, an officer of a large corporation, an actor, a salesman, a press operator, a stock clerk, a secretary, a housewife.

Clearly the disease of alcoholism is no respecter of persons.

About 80 million Americans use alcohol and enjoy the relaxation it brings them. Unfortunately, about one in fifteen of these develops the disease of alcoholism. This disease eventually causes premature death or insanity unless it is treated. But, it is a slow progressive illness and often requires five to twenty years before its victim becomes unemployable or incapable of being a responsible employee or housewife.

Myth II: Alcoholics are hopeless drunks.

Answer: Nothing could be farther from the truth. While there is no known cure, alcoholism can be arrested with proper treatment. Fifty to seventy percent of employed alcoholics who receive treatment recover and lead normal lives. For example, the businessman and the doctor who founded Alcoholics Anonymous were once considered by their friends to be "hopeless drunks". Instead, they demonstrated that alcoholics are anything but hopeless. And the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous, through which hundreds of thousands have received help, offers dramatic

proof that people with alcoholism can recover.

Myth III: Alcohol is the cause of alcoholism.

Answer: The exact causes are still not known despite continuing research. However, it is known that alcohol by itself is not the only cause. If it were, then there would be about 8 million alcoholics in Canada — the same number of people who use alcohol.

We can draw parallels with another disease whose cause we do not know — cancer. Some people develop cancer, others do not. Similarly, some drinkers develop alcoholism, others do not. Like cancer, in another way, alcoholism can be treated and the chance of recovery is better in the early stages.

Myth IV: Alcoholics could recover if they had enough willpower.

Answer: Recovery from any serious illness requires a strong will to live. This is not what we mean when we talk about willpower. People do not recover from illnesses by simply resolving that they will stop being sick! They can resolve to go to the doctor. That can help. They can resolve to follow the doctor's advice. That can help. They can resolve to follow through with any kind of treatment that is necessary. All these things can help in their recovery from the illness.

Actually, most people with alcoholism have a great deal of willpower. For example, the person who has a responsible job and serious case of alcoholism. By sheer willpower, he gets to work in the morning on days when with any other illness he would stay home in bed. After a bender, he gets up in the morning with butterflies in his stomach and suffers from "the shakes". Somehow he gets shaved without cutting himself too badly, has a shower, puts on his clothes, and takes a bit of the "hair of the dog that bit him" the night before. The nip of alcohol quiets his shaking nerves enough so that he can get a cup of coffee and a slice of toast to sit in his stomach. Then he goes off to work and somehow gets through the day

even though he may feel terrible. This is not the picture of a man lacking willpower.

Instead, it is a picture of a

problem.

Myth V: Alcoholism is a self-inflicted moral problem

Answer: Some people are ready to admit that alcoholism is a disease — but then maintain it is a "self-inflicted disease". This is a pretty silly idea if you look at it carefully in the light of what happens with other illnesses. Being overweight may help bring on a heart attack. Yet, we never say a fat person's heart attack was self-inflicted. Most people have had the experience of missing sleep and fatiguing themselves, and then catching a cold. Again, no one says that the cold was "self-inflicted", even though, with sufficient rest, they might not have caught the cold. Thus, if we say that alcoholism is "self-inflicted", we also must admit that many other illnesses are "self-inflicted". In addition, we do not speak of any disease itself as being a moral problem.



conscientious man who wishes to keep up appearances — a person who is suffering from an illness and does not know that he can get treatment for it. Like most people, he believes the myths about alcoholism being a moral

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An Introduction to Sexually Transmitted Disease

Sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), once called venereal diseases, are among the most common infectious diseases in Canada today. More than 20 STDs have now been identified, and they affect more than 1.3 million men and women in this country each year.

Understanding the basic facts about STDs—the ways in which they are spread, their common symptoms, and how they can be treated—is the first step toward prevention.

What are some of these basic facts?

It is important to understand at least five key points about all STDs in this country today:

1. STDs affect men and women of all backgrounds and economic levels. They are most prevalent among teenagers and young adults. Nearly two-thirds of all STDs occur in people younger than 25 years of age.

2. The incidence of STDs is rising, in part because in the last few decades, young people have become sexually active earlier yet are marrying later. In addition, divorce is more common. The net result is that sexually active people today are more likely to have multiple sex partners during their lives and are potentially at risk for developing STDs.

3. Many STDs initially cause no symptoms, particularly in women. When symptoms develop, they may be confused with those of other diseases not transmitted through sexual contact. However, even when an STD causes no symptoms, a person who is infected may be able to pass the disease on to a sex partner. That is why many doctors recommend periodic testing for people who have more than one sex partner.

4. Health problems caused by STDs tend to be more severe and more frequent for women than for men, in part because the frequency of asymptomatic infection means that many women do not seek care until serious problems have developed. Some STDs can spread into the uterus (womb) and fallopian tubes to cause pelvic inflammatory disease (PID), which in turn is a major cause of both infertility and ectopic (tubal) pregnancy. The latter can be fatal. STDs in women may also be associated with cervical cancer. One STD, human papillomavirus infection (HPV), can result in genital warts, but can also lead to cervical and other genital cancers; the relationship between other STDs and cervical cancer is not yet clear.

STDs can be passed from a mother to her baby before or during birth; some of these infections of the newborn can be cured easily, but others may cause a baby to be permanently disabled or even die.

5. When diagnosed and treated early, almost all STDs can be treated effectively. Some organisms, such as certain forms of gonococci, have become resistant to the drugs used to treat them and now require newer types of antibiotics. The most serious STD for which no cure now exists is acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS), a fatal viral infection of the immune system. Experts believe that having

STDs other than AIDS increases one's risk for becoming infected with the AIDS virus.

Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome

AIDS was first reported in the United States in 1981. It is caused by the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), a virus that

as small, hard, painless bumps in the vaginal area, on the penis, or around the anus; if untreated, they may grow and develop a fleshy, cauliflower-like appearance. Genital warts infect 500,000 Americans each year. Scientists believe that the virus responsible for genital warts also may cause several

transient rash and, eventually, serious involvement of the heart and central nervous system. The full course of the disease can take years. Penicillin remains the drug most commonly used to treat syphilis. Other diseases that may be sexually transmitted include trichomoniasis, bacterial vaginosis, cytomegalovirus infections, hepatitis B, scabies, and pubic lice. STDs in pregnant women are associated with a number of adverse outcomes, including spontaneous abortion, prematurity and infection in the newborn. Low birth weight and prematurity appear to be associated with most acute STDs, including chlamydial infection and trichomoniasis. Congenital or perinatal infection (infection that occurs either during or before birth) occurs in 30-70 percent of infants born to acutely infected mothers and may include pneumonia, potentially blinding eye infections, and permanent neurological damage.

What Can You Do to Prevent STDs?

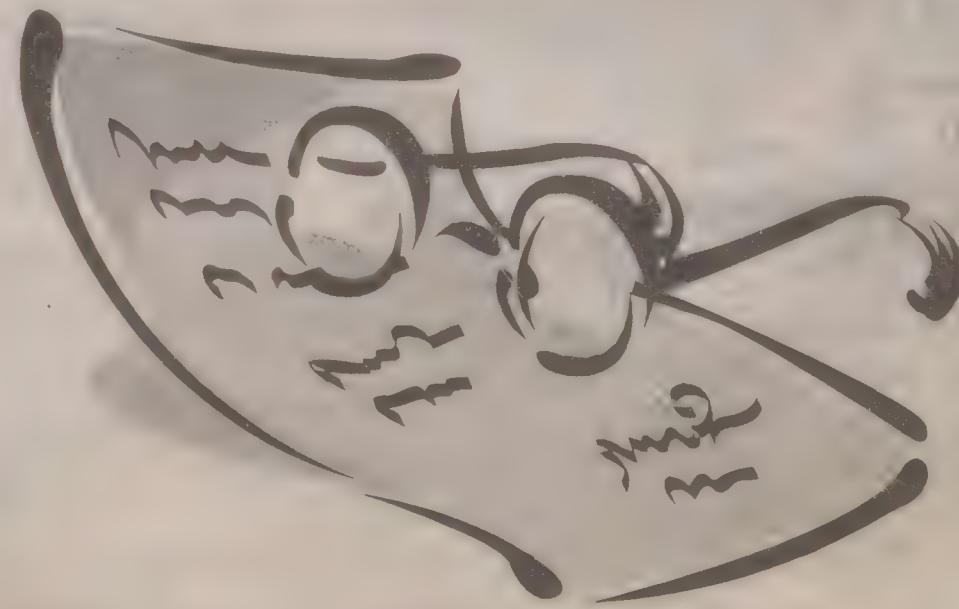
The best way to prevent STDs is to not have sexual intercourse. If you decide to be sexually active, there are things that you can do to reduce your risk of developing an STD. Be direct and frank about asking a new sex partner whether he or she has an STD, has been exposed to one, or has any unexplained physical symptoms. Learn to recognize the physical signs of STDs and inspect a sex partner's body, especially the genital area, for sores, rashes, or discharges. Don't have sex if your partner has signs or symptoms of STDs. Urge him/her to get medical attention as soon as possible. Use a condom (rubber) during sexual intercourse and learn to use it correctly. Diaphragms may also reduce the risk of transmission of some STDs. Although there is some laboratory evidence that spermicides can kill STD organisms, scientists are still evaluating the usefulness of spermicides in preventing STDs. Some studies have found that frequent use of spermicides (more than three times a week) may cause vaginal inflammation. Anyone who is sexually active with someone other than a long-term monogamous partner should:

Have regular checkups for STDs even in the absence of symptoms. These tests can be done during a routine visit to the doctor's office. Learn the common symptoms of STDs. Seek medical help immediately if any suspicious symptoms develop, even if they are mild.

Anyone diagnosed as having an STD should:

1. Notify all recent sex partners and urge them to get a checkup.
2. Follow the doctor's orders and complete the full course of medication prescribed. A follow-up test to ensure that the infection has been cured is often an important final step in treatment.

3. Avoid all sexual activity while being treated for an STD. Sometimes people are too embarrassed or frightened to ask for help or information. Most STDs are readily treated, and the earlier a person seeks treatment and warns sex partners about the disease, the less likely that the disease will do irreparable physical damage, be spread to others.



destroys the body's ability to fight off infection. An estimated 1 million people are currently infected in the U.S., including more than 2000 infants, most of whom contracted the disease from their mothers. People who have AIDS are very susceptible to many life-threatening diseases, called opportunistic infections, and to certain forms of cancer. Transmission of the virus primarily occurs during sexual activity and by sharing of needles used to inject intravenous drugs.

Chlamydial Infections

These infections are now the most common of all STDs, with an estimated 400,000 new cases occurring each year. In both men and women, chlamydial infection may cause an abnormal genital discharge and burning with urination. In women, untreated chlamydial infection may lead to PID, one of the most common causes of infertility in women and of ectopic pregnancy. However, many people with chlamydial infection have few or no symptoms of infection. Once diagnosed, chlamydial infections are treatable with an antibiotic drug. Genital Herpes

Genital herpes affects an estimated 3 million Canadians. Approximately 50,000 new cases of this incurable infection develop annually. Herpes infections are caused by herpes simplex virus (HSV). The major symptoms of herpes infection are painful blisters or open sores in the genital area. These may be preceded by a tingling or burning sensation in the legs, buttocks, or genital region. The herpes sores usually disappear within 2 to 3 weeks, but the virus remains in the body and the lesions may recur from time to time. Severe or frequently recurrent genital herpes is now treated with acyclovir, an antiviral drug available by prescription; it helps control the symptoms but does not eliminate the herpes virus from the body. Women who acquire genital herpes during pregnancy can transmit the virus to their babies. Untreated HSV infection in newborns can result in mental retardation and death.

Genital warts

Genital warts (also called venereal warts, or condylomata acuminata) are caused by a virus related to the virus that causes common skin warts. Genital warts usually first appear



Syphilis has increased dramatically in recent years, with more than 130,000 cases reported in 1990. The first symptoms of syphilis may go undetected because they are very mild and disappear spontaneously. The initial symptom is a chancre, a painless open sore that usually appears on the penis or around or in the vagina. If untreated, syphilis may go on to more advanced stages, including a

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Anyway you look at it, one *is still* the loneliest number that could ever be.

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Something Else

By nik rofeelya

WEED "HARD TO KILL"



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I love this album. Quite a bold statement to start this review with, but I couldn't figure out another way to do so. Sounding kinda trancetechnoindustrial80'seurosynthpopish with a natural electronic sound to it, "Hard To Kill" has to be one of the brightest stars in the CD galaxy I've heard in some time.

Taking their name from the Botanical Gardens in Geneva, (not ganja, mon!) Weed have created one of the most spiritually uplifting albums I have heard in some time. Tracks like "Further Away", "Again & Again" and the first single "If Only U Could See" demonstrate the powerful range of this duo. Very club-floor friendly and a joy to listen to on headphones while dazing away.

The uniquely ethereal vocal stylings of Christina Handrabur and the synth-core programming of husband Dan, make it very difficult to attach a musical label to Weed. And believe me, this is a good thing.

To be released on April 6, 1999, fans of all kinds of dance music should really enjoy this album.

Rating- **** out of *****



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Now, the last time I checked, musical classification in a record shop was to aid you in finding a large group of artists in the musical genre you prefer. With that being said, WHAT THE HELL IS THIS IN THE "ELECTRONIC/INDUSTRIAL" SECTION FOR? I have to admit, I could have done my homework on the band, by then realizing it is nothing more than a knock-off heavy metal band ala Marilyn Manson, with a cover version of an 80's classic.

Much in the way that Manson's version of "Sweet Dreams" is his claim to mainstream fame, Orgy's cover of the New Order track "Blue Monday" is theirs. Too bad to, cause it's the only worthwhile song on the CD. Mind you, I'm not a real big metal fan, so this review could be kind of biased.

This is a very in your face heavy album. Lots of guitars, thumping drums, and layered electronics, (ah, that's why it's there, I'm shocked the new Erasure sounding Cher album wasn't in that section!) this is an album for those whom like the heavy stuff. This album although, after listening to it a couple times kind of grows on you. It is danceable, quite melodic and man, does their version of Blue Monday ever kick! But I don't think that I could listen to it on any regular basis.

As far as generic heavy music goes, I suppose it's ok, but as an electronic album, it kind of chews.

out of ***

Hugs and Kisses, Welts and Wishes

nik

P.S. The karma police know who you are...3476

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News From GLCCE

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Announcing A New Social And Fund- Raising Event for the GLBT Community

The Board of Directors of the Gay & Lesbian Community Centre of Edmonton is pleased to announce the First Annual "The Curtain Rises...", a fund-raising event in support of Centre programs. A unique ongoing theme has been chosen for this yearly event bringing together two purposeful design elements.

Aside from being just a fund-raising event, "The Curtain Rises..." will provide local musicians and performers an opportunity to showcase their talent before a large and diverse audience. Various groups

will also be in attendance to display materials and promote their role in our community. The fun is added with the second element...the play or movie. Each year's party will incorporate design elements from the production including period costumes, music of the era, and historical significance from the movie itself or the year it was produced.

Judy Garland's "The Wizard of OZ" has been chosen as the first theme movie for "The Curtain Rises...". All friends of Dorothy are invited to follow the yellow brick road to the Citadel Theater Complex, on Saturday, September 11, 1999. As Edmonton's Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgendered Community come together, we celebrate our diversity and our equality as Albertans and Canadians. Proceeds from the event are in support of programs of the Gay & Lesbian Community Centre of Edmonton. Dress for the event is semi-formal or movie/period costume and attendance limited to 1000 people. Tickets for the event will be on sale beginning in mid-May.

A silent auction will be held throughout the evening, with items displayed in the MacLab Atrium and Shocter Theater lobby. Stage areas will be set with

entertainment scheduled in both areas. The evening will also include dancing amidst the palm trees and ferns. And be sure to bring your appetite, as an extensive hors d'oeuvre buffet will feature culinary treats created by a number of Edmonton restauranteurs and caterers.

The organizing committee is presently contacting additional sponsors for this event. As well, the Auction Acquisition subcommittee will soon be soliciting donations in the area of Travel & Accommodation, Dining Out, Business & Professional Services, Artworks, Furnishings, and unique to this event - Entertainment Memorabilia.

If you would like more information about participating as a sponsor, auction donor or as a volunteer, please contact the Centre at (780) 488-3234, 9:00 am to noon Monday to Friday or call me at home (780) 435-9058. We look forward to telling you more about this exciting project and discussing ways in which you or your company may participate.

Sincerely,
Angie Reid, Volunteer Special Events Co-ordinator, on behalf of the
Board of Directors Gay & Lesbian
Community Centre of Edmonton Society

Love across the Border: Two Women's Story

By Jeanne Shaw

"Pam's been arrested
at the airport!"

I was having a quiet weekend, and then, the phone rang.

"I have to go to Calgary! I have to go now!" Pam's partner, Linda, was barely able to control her panic. Slowly, the reality sank in; my best friends were about to be separated because they were lesbians.

How did this happen to these two women? Linda, an amazing musician and a landscaper. Pam, a multi-talented artist who creates exquisitely detailed and

vibrant landscape paintings. They met at the Gay Games in 1990 and fell deeply in love. Unfortunately, Pam was an American and Linda a Canadian. Pam decided to stay in Canada with Linda and obtained a false identity. They knew of no legal option available to them. No one did.

Through the panic of the next few days they discovered LEGIT: The Lesbian and Gay Immigration Taskforce. They learned of the policy changes and procedures which have been made possible by the efforts of LEGIT over the past years and that Pam could now submit an Immigration application. However, her case was very complex and required two

lawyers, which has left them with large debts. This part of their story, which began in November 1997, is still not over for Pam and Linda. The emotional and financial costs have been very high. The stress created by Pam's possible deportation caused Linda to develop a debilitating mental illness, which required a short stay in hospital. She can now only work part-time.

Without a work permit, Pam was not able to work for over a year. They have sold off all their assets.

The local community has helped with fundraising, donations and many letters of support. Friends have lent them thousands of dollars.

It has become evident to our small community

that we need to expand the circle of support for Pam and Linda. They have risked everything to win their case and stay together. The legal fees have



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been enormous, and they need your help to reduce the large debt this struggle has put them in. As lesbians and gay men, we must support each other as we work for equal access to immigration.

I think this story will have a happy ending. It looks like her application will be accepted on humanitarian and compassionate grounds. Immigration has been very reasonable with her case so far.

Meanwhile, your donation will really help them and would be greatly appreciated. For instance, if 500 people each helped with a donation of just \$10, the remaining legal fees would be paid. Please send donations to: Linda Walker, Box 166, Winlaw, B.C., V0G 2JO

LEGIT
P.O. Box 384, Vancouver, V6N 2C2
Telephone: 604-877-7768
Web site: <http://www.qrd.org/qrd/www/world/immigration/legit.html>

AIDS: The Therapist's Journey *Avoiding Burnout*

by Michael Shernoff, MSW

Published in *A Perilous Calling: The Hazards of Psychotherapy Practice*,
M. Sussman, Editor, 1994: John Wiley & Sons

The potential for burnout in AIDS service providers is a serious reality. My experience is that burnout happens largely when people ignore their feelings. Thus, I share in this chapter what it is like for me to do this work, in the hope that other therapists doing similar work will find it helpful to read about my struggles. The challenge remains - how do we sustain ourselves and each other for this reality? AIDS will likely be with us for the rest of our professional lives.

It would not have been possible for me to live through all of this, without losing whatever "serenity" I had, if I had not been in my own active psychotherapy and supervision with a remarkable woman who has been my professional mentor for the past 15 years. In addition, for five years, in the early to mid 1980s, I attended a support group for health care professionals who were working in AIDS. We met regularly and provided ourselves with a "safe space" to ascertain what each needed in order to continue to do this draining, yet exhilarating, work.

It has become increasingly clear to me from supervising therapists working in AIDS, and facilitating support groups for AIDS professionals, that the only way any of us are able to continue to expend the prodigious amounts of energy demanded by this work, is when we are able to feed and nurture our many needs as individuals. When I ask the professionals I work with what they do to "feed" themselves, they often look at me as if I were crazy. I have been told on more than one occasion, "I don't have time to do my work, have a life, and take care of my own needs as well." This is a poignant conflict. Similarly, a large part of my work with care-partners of people with AIDS is to encourage them to take time for themselves and to give themselves much-needed breaks from their routine. I am amazed at how resistant both colleagues and clients are to the notion of building in time for play and fun in the midst of the horror.

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Speaking Of Normal

By Liz Massiah, MSW, RSW
Clinical Social Worker

(with thanks again to Gordon Portman for his editing expertise.)

LESBIAN 'DEAD BED' - A PROBLEM FOR GAY MEN TOO.

"Lesbian dead bed" is a commonly used phrase to describe the lessening of genital based sexual activity between lesbians who have been in relationship for an extended period of time...the gradual erosion of the highly lusty beginnings of intimate relationships into ones that have infrequent or no sex.

Lesbians do not have an exclusive on this issue though- just read Anne Landers and you will see how pervasive it is - and talk with gay men and they will tell you their 'frequency' woes too.

What amazes me is not that sexual activity declines with length of relationship, but given the stresses and strains of life, that we manage to have sex at all...as much as we claim to love sex, even "doing it" several times a week does not use up nearly as much time as sleeping, working or watching TV - in a sexy week.

A list of common factors that impact sexual frequency might look something like this : from fatigue, illness - sex does not go well with serious illness, although its not necessarily always impacted; many medications (most anti-depressants, high blood pressure drugs to name just two) decrease libido or the ability to have an orgasm or to be erect or to ejaculate.

Issues of communication and trust; and the power and control issues in every relationship that get played out sexually. One partner will demand sex as a way of being in charge. Another will refuse sex as a means of being in charge, of rejecting the intimate partner.

Then there are of unresolved experiences of sexual abuse and assault, as a child, adolescent or adult. These too impact on our ability to be sexual.

Then there is the whole whore/virgin dilemma, all those messages about "good girls don't"; our beliefs about the nastiness; perversity of lesbian or gay sex that we are all raised with ... and hear regularly in our lives.

Join that with our sexually obsessed and yet sex avoidant culture to get in the way. Then there are our religious beliefs and learnings about sex - mostly to not !!

And then there is all the stuff about who initiates what, when, where, how and why - and who has more or less sexual experience. And who wants

vanilla sorts of sex and others want more 'down and dirty and raunchy', or maybe even to act out their power and control stuff with sado-masochism. Then add issues of intimacy and distance, trust and safety, and after a while its a wonder any of us manage to be sexual at all.

As if that isn't enough, add two women with periods, menopause, hysterectomies and hormone replacement therapy into the mix. And child rearing and nursing and late night feedings into the story. And couples with kids who open bedroom doors at inopportune moments and ask "what are those noises you two are making?". And prostate problems. And shift work.

And then there is the whole discussion of what is "sex" anyhow? Just who determines this and how? Many heterosexuals believe that anything that isn't missionary position sexual intercourse just doesn't count. Gay men often talk about not having had sex unless they have anal sex. Despite having lots of wonderful orgasms together with lots of touching, its not sex unless its intercourse of some sort.

So is it sex to a dyke if there is no penetration of something by something? Do tongues and fingers count or not? The heterosexual world seems to not think so, since they assume by and large, that sex means penetration of a vagina by a penis. This lets men have anal sex with female children to leave them as virgins for their future husbands.

Many gay men attach a great deal of significance to anal sex, with being penetrated and thus vulnerable. And perhaps afraid of the pain. And the safety concerns are too real for comfort for some.

And who says that its "sex" only if you have an orgasm. Or don't. And then lets get into the whole topic of female ejaculation and not being a proper dyke unless we do that too. So much for the neatness inherent in lesbian sex - now we are supposed to want wet spots too !

What do you and your partner mean by being sexual? That is what matters the most. Not what the rest of the world thinks it is or should be. Is it the cuddle in the morning, the backrub in the bath, the casual caress of her breast, or his bottom while doing the dishes? What do you two need, what do you want?

Real discussions about sexual activity is tough for many of us. They require connecting and communicating, and sharing. And taking risks - lots of risks. And being willing to understand what we are trying to say to our partner with our bodies.

For some couples, sex is almost sacred. And for most, this varies with the occasion and what else is happening in their lives. Sex as determined by ovulation so as to make babies can become just an anxious chore, not an intimate encounter. For others, it seems to be just another bodily function. Like bowels, that must function regularly or we have discomfort - but that we hesitate to discuss. Feels better when its done, we know when we want to go and its basically an inconvenience. And the sense of urgency and relief varies enormously too.

One research report suggests that any couple

that has sex less than six times a year is a non-sexual couple. So does that mean that the six times they have sex, wonderful, terrific, sexy sex don't count? That strikes me as a pretty arrogant assumption.

So in essence I am saying, be careful with these ideas. Be careful with the standards you are applying. Some examples: a male couple wondered about their relationship becoming too sexually focused when they kept having sex twice a week, happily and enjoyably, for many years. They wondered if it should not have stopped, and were they using sex to avoid other issues. And a female couple wondered if sex only on Sundays was all right. A het. couple wondered about s-m, and consent and power. Or the couple that wanted to split up because after six months of sex every day, they had missed two days. And couples dealing with breast cancer, another with heart disease, or an injury, all discovered that intimacy increased as they learned new ways to pleasure one another.

Are you experiencing yourself and your partner in a sexual way that meets both your needs most of the time? Three times a day, three times a year? If one of you is discontented, how can you do something different to make it better between you? Can one partner pleasure the other and that be fine if she is not lusty herself? What if one wants multiple orgasms and the other finds one is lots. What if he wants to be a "top" for anal sex, but refuses to receive, saying its degrading? Or one person insists on being completely covered and all the lights off.

Sex needs to be talked about. And sometimes we need help to learn how to talk with one another about sexual matters. Odds are that if other matters are tough to discuss and resolve within your relationship, then so is sex. And the reverse is true. Sex therapists simply use sexual activity as a vehicle for improving communication, trust and understanding.

My bet is that if one of you is silently fussing about your sexual relationship, then the other is too. Genital sex can be a complex, wonderfully enriching part of everyone's life. With yourself, with a casual partner, with a long term partner. The movie BLISS is an excellent video to watch to see how issues of sexuality, abuse, trust and healing intertwine. Its an old saying in sexuality circles, but once again, it needs saying - our most powerful sex organ is our brain. Most of us have pretty good brains, and good ideas of what we want or might try... we just need to feel safe to talk about raunchy sex, about bowels, or about sacred connections.

(Topics for columns usually come from real conversations with real people about matters of interest or concern. The material is always changed in order to ensure privacy and confidentiality. The opinions are those of the author and are not intended to replace personal consultation with an accredited, accountable professional.)

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The Truth is Out There.....:)

Shut Yer Trap, Bub!

The new metro cop pulled a speeder who was zipping down Maple Avenue. "Can I see your license and registration, bub?", the cop inquired.

"But officer," the fellow started, "I can explain..."

"Shut yer trap, bub!" snapped the officer. "You're going downtown and sit a while 'til the sarge gets back."

"But, officer, I think you really should know..."

"And I said to shut yer trap! You're going to jail!"

A few hours later the cop looked in on his prisoner and said, "Lucky for you that the sarge is at his daughter's wedding. He'll be in a good mood when he gets back."

"Don't count on it," shot back the sap in the cell. "I'm the groom."

The plate and bucket method

Three women get together for coffee and the topic of conversation turns to contraception.

The first woman says "We've used the rhythm method for years. The Holy Father approves of it and its surprisingly effective - it's only ever failed us twice"

The second woman says "Holy Father, Shmoly Father. We don't go for all that pious claptrap. We've always used the pill. It's easy, it doesn't rob us of our pleasure and it's only ever failed us once"

The third woman says "We've always used the plate and bucket method. My husband and I met in the army and it was hard to get any private time with each other so we'd usually hide out in a closet somewhere. My husband, being shorter than me, would have to stand on a bucket. When I'd see his eyes get as big and round as plates I'd kick the bucket out from under him. It's never failed us".

The Perfect Man

The perfect man is gentle
Never cruel or mean
He has a beautiful smile
And keeps his face so clean.
The perfect man likes children
And will raise them by your side
He'll do anything in his power
To convey his feelings of love to you.
He's a best friend to your mother
And kisses away your pain.
He never has made you cry
Or hurt you in any way
To hell with this endless poem
The perfect man is GAY.

The long line of Judgment.

A curious fellow died one day and found himself waiting in the long line of judgment. As he stood there, he noticed that some souls were allowed to march right through the gates of heaven. Others, though, were led over to Satan who threw them into the burning pit. But every so often, instead of hurling a poor soul into the fire, Satan would toss a soul off to one side into a small pile.

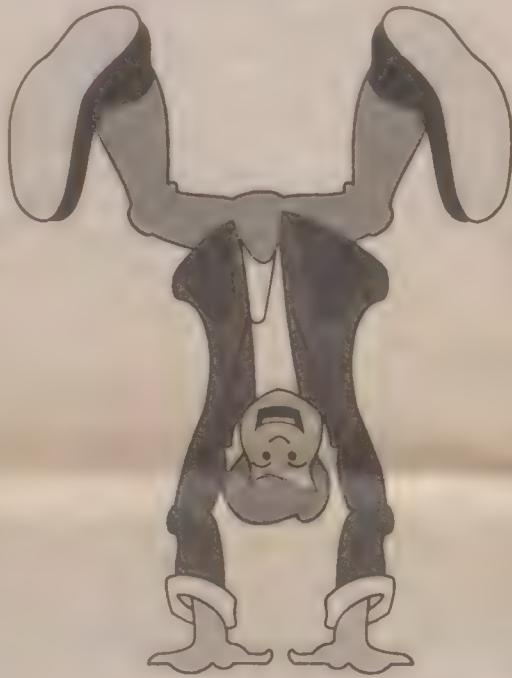
After watching Satan do this several times, the fellow's curiosity got the best of him. So he strolled over and asked Satan, "Excuse me, Prince of Darkness," he said. "I'm waiting in line for judgment, but I couldn't help wondering why are you tossing those people aside instead of flinging them into the fires of hell with the others?"

"Ah, those..." Satan said with a groan. "They're all from Vancouver; they're too wet to burn yet"

Careful What You Give!

Did you hear about the fellow that was talking to his buddy, and he said, "I don't know what to get my lover for his birthday - he has everything, and besides, he can afford to buy anything he wants, so I'm stumped."

His buddy said, "I have an idea - why don't you make up a certificate saying he



can have 60 minutes of great sex, any way he wants it - he'll probably be thrilled."

So the fellow did. The next day his buddy said, "Well? Did you take my suggestion?"

"Yes, I did," said the fellow.

"Did he like it?" His buddy asked.

"Oh yes! he jumped up, thanked me, kissed me on the forehead and ran out the door, yelling "I'll be back in an hour!!"

911

Emily Sue passed away and Bubba called 911. The 911 operator told Bubba that she would send someone out right away.

"Where do you live?" asked the operator.

Bubba replied, "At the end of Eucalyptus Drive."

The operator asked, "Can you spell that for me?"

There was a long pause and finally Bubba said, "How 'bout if I drag her over to Oak Street and you pick her up there?"

Volunteer Firefighters

One dark night outside a small town, a fire started inside the local chemical plant. Before long, it exploded into flames and

an alarm went out to fire departments from miles around. After fighting the fire for over an hour, the chemical company president approached the fire chief and said. "All of our secret formulas are in the vault in the center of the plant. They must be saved! I will give \$50,000 to the engine company that brings them out safely!"

From the distance, a long siren was heard and another fire truck came into sight. It was a local volunteer fire company composed entirely of men over 65. To everyone's amazement, the little fire engine raced through the chemical plant gates and drove straight into the middle of the inferno. In the distance, the other firemen watched as the old timers hopped off of their rig and began to fight the fire with an effort that they had never seen before.

After an hour of intense fighting, the volunteer company had extinguished the fire and saved the secret formulas. Joyous, the chemical company president announced that he would double the reward to \$100,000 and walked over to personally thank each of the volunteers. After thanking each of the old men individually, the president asked the group what they intended to do with the reward money. The fire truck driver looked him right in the eye and said, "The first thing we're going to do is fix the dang brakes on that truck!"

What Happen???

A man was helping one of his cows give birth when he noticed his 4 year-old son standing wide-eyed at the fence, soaking in the whole event.

The man thought, "Great...he's 4 and I'm gonna have to start explaining the birds and bees. No need to jump the gun - I'll just let him ask, and I'll answer."

After everything was over, the man walked over to his son and said, "Well son, do you have any questions?"

"Just one..." gasped the still wide-eyed lad. "How fast was that calf going when he hit that cow?"

After everything was over, the man walked over to his son and said, "Well son, do you have any questions?"

"Just one..." gasped the still wide-eyed lad. "How fast was that calf going when he hit that cow?"

Just then a man came in coughing. He asked John for their best cough syrup. Try as he might, John could not find the cough syrup. Remembering his boss' warning, he sold the man a box of Ex-Lax and told him to take it all at once. The customer did as John said and then walked outside and leaned against a lamp post.

Bob had seen the whole thing and came over to ask John what had transpired. "He wanted something for his cough, but I couldn't find the dang cough syrup. So, I substituted Ex-Lax and told him to take it all at once," John explained.

"Ex-Lax??! That won't cure a cough!" Bob

shouted angrily.

"Sure it will!" John said, pointing at the man leaning on the lamp post.

"Just look at him. He's afraid to cough."

Bump!

A man who had just undergone a very complicated operation in an Alberta Hospital kept complaining about a bump on his head and a terrible headache. Since his operation had been an intestinal one, there was no earthly reason why he should be complaining of a headache. Finally his nurse, fearing that the man might be suffering from some post operation shock, spoke to the doctor about it.

"Don't worry about a thing, nurse," the doctor assured her. "He really does have a bump on his head. About halfway through the operation we ran out of anesthetic."

Come In

A repair man who was called out to fix a person's phone knocked on the front door of a home, and heard a faint, high pitched, "Come In".

He tried the door and it was locked, so he went around to the back door.

He knocked again and heard again the high pitched "Come In".

As he entered the kitchen a large, mean, snarling Doberman met him.

As he plastered himself against the wall he called out for help.

Again, he heard the "Come In".

He slid down the wall to the living room to see a parrot in cage.

He said, "For Pete's sake, is that all you can say is 'Come In'?"

The parrot laughed and said, "Sic Him"

Executed

Three men are about to be executed. One's a brunette, one's a redhead, and one's a blonde.

The guard brings the brunette forward and the executioner asks if he has any last requests. He says no and the executioner shouts, "Ready!...Aim!!..."

Suddenly the blonde yells, "EARTHQUAKE!!" Everyone is startled and looks around. He escapes.

The guard brings the redhead forward and the executioner asks if he has any last requests. He says no and the executioner shouts, "Ready!...Aim!!..."

Suddenly the redhead yells, "TORNADO!!" Everyone is startled and looks around. He escapes.

By now the blonde has it all figured out. The guard brings him forward and the executioner asks if he has any last requests. He says no and the executioner shouts, Ready! ... Aim!!..."

...and the blonde yells, "FIRE!!!"

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Terms of Same-Sex Endearment

Language has the power to define the dream of equality
By Steve Bryant and Demian

We believe that the way we, as journalists, describe our community may ultimately have more impact than the facts we relate. In fact, the way the gay and lesbian community describes itself in terminology and symbols is the way the community thinks about itself and, eventually, becomes the way others perceive us. If we use the language of respect and support, the world is more likely to see us in that light. One of the first chores for the gay liberation movement in the 1970s was convincing reporters to hear our stories and to adopt the terms we prefer to describe ourselves. At the time, most journalists described our community with terminology that was usually either clinical (i.e., "homosexual") or derogatory (i.e., "self-avowed"). The stories often characterized us as veritable criminals whereas, in reality, being homosexual is not a crime anywhere in the United States.

There was another burden. Twelve years ago, there was little information published about same-sex couples. Both the gay and non-gay press assumed that our community was comprised primarily of singles. Yet as early as 1989, a national survey of randomly selected participants indicated that more than 60 percent of those in the gay and lesbian community were in a relationship. Nonetheless, the community was slow to acknowledge that lovers often become couples, and couples become families.

Not surprisingly, there was very little agreement about language to respectfully describe those couples. To discover what couples called each other, and to better understand how they had constructed their families, we conducted our own national survey of lesbian and gay couples in 1990. Responses from 1,266 couples revealed that most called each other "partner," "life partner," "lover," or "spouse." Lesser numbers called themselves "roommate/friend," "mate/life mate," and "boyfriend/girlfriend," among other terms. A few adventurous couples called each other "husband" or "wife"; however, we learned from interviews that they were sometimes accused of aping "straight" culture.

More recently, we have witnessed large segments of the gay and lesbian community fondly embracing the very same words that oppressors used to describe us. We are personally offended by anyone calling us "faggots" or "queers"; it therefore made no sense to use that kind of language in our publications.

Just Plain "Marriage"

One of the terminology challenges with the word "marriage" is that it represents both a legal contract licensed by the state and a religious or social ceremony. Because the iconographic trappings of church ceremonies come first to mind when discussing marriage, we believe it important to spell out the difference between these two distinctly different types of marriage. We also frequently rely on the phrase "legal marriage" for clarity. Where the reference is to marrying same-sex partners, we use the term "same-sex marriage," or simply "marriage."

Both the gay and mainstream press have generally been less diligent. While there has been a lot of attention paid to legal marriage, the gay press has sometimes used the term "queer marriage," which is neither accurate nor positive. It is merely shocking and, in our opinion, denigrating to the marriage partners.

We pay a lot of attention to the terminology used for legal marriage because there is a lot at stake. Not only does the language describe the civil right, it defines

what we think of that civil right. "Queer marriage" does not appear to take marriage seriously. It also classifies it as a different, rather than equal, institution.

We would also like to see the term "gay marriage" put to rest. Opposite-sex couples do not describe their relationships as "straight marriage". Using the term "gay marriage" gives the impression that something different or "special" is wanted, whereas the only demand is for treatment equal to that which opposite-sex couples receive.

Another reason to eschew the term "gay marriage" is that the denial of legal marriage is not due to one or both partners' sexual orientation. In fact, there are plenty of married gay men and lesbians — they happen to be married to opposite-sex partners. These gay men and lesbians were able to marry because their partners had different anatomy. No marriage license asks for the sexual orientation of the marriage partners.

Those who can be persuaded to support legal marriage for same-sex couples are more easily won over with the language of rational discourse than with the euphemistic use of "gender." We believe that the term "queer marriage" is alienating and an entirely unpersuasive alternative.

Part of the problem with naming marriage, stems from the fact that same-sex couples have been denied this right for so long that they never expected to legally marry. Therefore had no need to name or describe the public or private, formal or informal, rituals they have long used to confirm their commitment to each other.

Q-this, Q-that

Over the years, we resisted the use of terms like "queer" that have become so popular. After posting an article on our Web site called, "Why Partners Task Force for Gay & Lesbian Couples Does Not Use 'Queer' to Define Our Community," responses from site visitors were mixed.

It took decades for the New York Times to adopt the word "gay," rather than "homosexual." The term "gay" transformed perceptions of the gay and lesbian community — including our own — because it was positive, non-clinical and self-selected.

These days, the names of many gay groups include the word "queer." Because the term is used so widely, the Times and other publications could easily begin to adopt it. Although self-selected by some in the gay and lesbian community, it is generally understood as a term of abuse.

No other subculture insists on formally and seriously addressing itself by words that have been used traditionally as weapons of hate — "queer," "dyke," and "faggot" were crafted as taunts and insults. No other group prefers that others describe it by such oppressive language. Use of these terms can give the impression that the gay and lesbian community sees itself as perpetual victims.

The willingness to use oppressive language in our books, newspapers, and institutions reflects the widespread use of this terminology in the gay and lesbian community. We think this has been detrimental to the emotional health of gay men and lesbians. It also confuses and puts off those who would otherwise be our supporters. It also makes it more difficult to work on some political issues because inappropriate terminology can cloud understanding of the real issues at stake.

We believe it is humiliating and self-destructive to embrace and use words to describe oneself that are used in derision by someone who hates you. It can undermine one's self-esteem and it is hurtful to others when repeated. This is one method by which the oppression we face is perpetuated.

Negative names can and have been used with a sense of irony, or in a humorous context, just as African-Americans have traded pejorative insults in a cynical send-up of cultural attitudes. But some in the gay community have taken the use of "queer" far beyond humor and irony, embracing the term for everyday purposes.

They claim that using disrespectful terms like "queer," "faggot," and "pansy" somehow dilutes the terms, or "reclaims" them. (Why "claim" them in the first place?) This approach does not dissuade those who persist in using these words to attack us, nor in softening their impact upon many of us who hear them. Hateful words can be very potent and it makes no sense to encourage their use.

"Queer" is particularly nasty. Dictionaries define the word as "unusual or abnormal" and also "worthless or counterfeit." This is certainly the way the word is understood by most English speakers, including the current mayor of Montgomery, Alabama, who chairs the state governor's re-election

campaign. He was recently quoted saying, "I used the word 'queer' and I'll use it again. I'm not going to call them gay. I don't approve of their lifestyle one bit."

Further, the use of "queer" by gay men and lesbians appears to be romanticized, and perpetuates the perception of the gay and lesbian community as "sexual outlaws." Holding oneself apart from the mainstream creates a condition of separateness and devalues the transformative potential of inclusion. Accentuating our difference at all costs can deter us from seeking and gaining full equality.

Inclusion Requests

Over the years, Partners Task Force for Gay & Lesbian Couples has been asked to change its name to explicitly include transsexuals and bisexuals. We never felt the need to do so — our mission was serving same-sex couples, and both transsexuals and bisexuals can form same-sex relationships. Two male bisexuals, for example, would not form a bisexual relationship with each other — regardless of their attraction to both men and women, they would have formed a same-sex relationship. However, if we had to do it over, we would probably now select the name "Partners Task Force for Same-Sex Couples" to signal inclusion to all, whether gay, lesbian, or bisexual.

One other group asked for inclusion: those engaged in a committed, intimate relationship with more than two people, an arrangement known as polyfidelity. Such relationships, by their nature, include at least two same-sex partners. We considered these relationships generally beyond our scope, in part because they appear to be quite rare. In the course of interviewing hundreds of couples, we encountered only one triad to interview. In addition, only three of the 1,266 relationships represented in our couples' survey were triads.

Defining Our Community and Ourselves

While gathering information and resources, we have seen a growing awareness of couples' issues. In addition to more news coverage and a profusion of books, hundreds of same-sex couples have made their appearance on the Internet with Web sites that present their relationship to a global audience.

This attention has been a long time coming — decades after the first appearance of gay liberation and a recognizable gay and lesbian community. This time lag is remarkable when you consider that the majority of gay men and lesbians are in relationships. The delay must be partly attributed to societal oppression, both external and internal, aided in large part by language that both dampened the community's emerging self-esteem and denied appropriate recognition to same-sex couples.

This concern for precise and positive language does not arise from an all-consuming interest in "political correctness," but from the knowledge that language has the power to define the dream of equality — and the dream has the power to define the future.

It is important to plan for a future where all citizens are treated equally under the law, have the same opportunities, and are not penalized for being gay or lesbian. When such a future arrives, will anyone still insist on being called a queer?

(Permission granted to reprint from Partners)

through uncertainty to new possibilities

Why therapy ?

What good does talking do ?

Therapy can:

- ▽ create a private place to heal emotional wounds
- ▽ enhance one's sense of personal worthiness
- ▽ diminish the impact of old experiences
- ▽ challenge the old beliefs that maintain self-defeating patterns
- ▽ open new possibilities
- ▽ provide information/resources
- ▽ help you make difficult life choices

What would we talk about ? Almost anything you want :

- ▽ am I crazy ?
- ▽ are we awful parents ? what's wrong with our family ?
- ▽ why am I so depressed?
- ▽ why can't I forget about
- ▽ are my sexual desires/behaviors "all right to have"
- ▽ will these flashbacks and memories ever leave me alone ?
- ▽ how can we get along better ?
- ▽ what does my life mean ?
- ▽ how do we deal with our kids, aging parents
- ▽ what did I do to deserve this illness ?
- ▽ and anything else that needs to be talked about.

▽ Do we just talk ? No. We might also:

- ▽ draw, write, do hypnosis or e.m.d.r.
- ▽ use stories, movement, the sand tray
- ▽ laugh, cry, wonder
- ▽ use whatever is appropriate and helpful

Elizabeth Massiah, M.S.W., R.S.W.

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Managing Your Money

by David Ushko

Alberta's Proposed Single Rate Tax - Who wins/who loses?

Alberta has made recent headlines with tax changes announced in its 1999 provincial budget. It will become the only province, other than Quebec, which has had its own tax rate for years, to set its own tax rate, independent of federal tax rates. Alberta's income tax rate is currently calculated as 44% of the basic federal rate (plus a 0.5% flat tax on taxable income and 8% surtax on Alberta tax over \$ 3,500). As there are currently several federal tax rates (depending on your level of taxable income), there are also currently several personal tax rates in Alberta. For example, a single individual would have a 1998 Alberta tax rate on the last dollar earned of:

Taxable Income	1998 Alberta Rate
20,000	7.54 %
30,000	11.50 %
50,000	12.86 %

The 1999 Alberta budget proposes a single rate of 11% for everyone. The existing flat tax and surtax will also be eliminated. As you can see, this new 11% rate is lower than the current rate at higher income levels, and higher than the current rate at lower income levels. To compensate for the higher rate for lower income earners, the budget also proposes to increase the personal and spousal* amounts (for Alberta tax purposes only) to \$ 11,620.

What are the net results of all these changes?

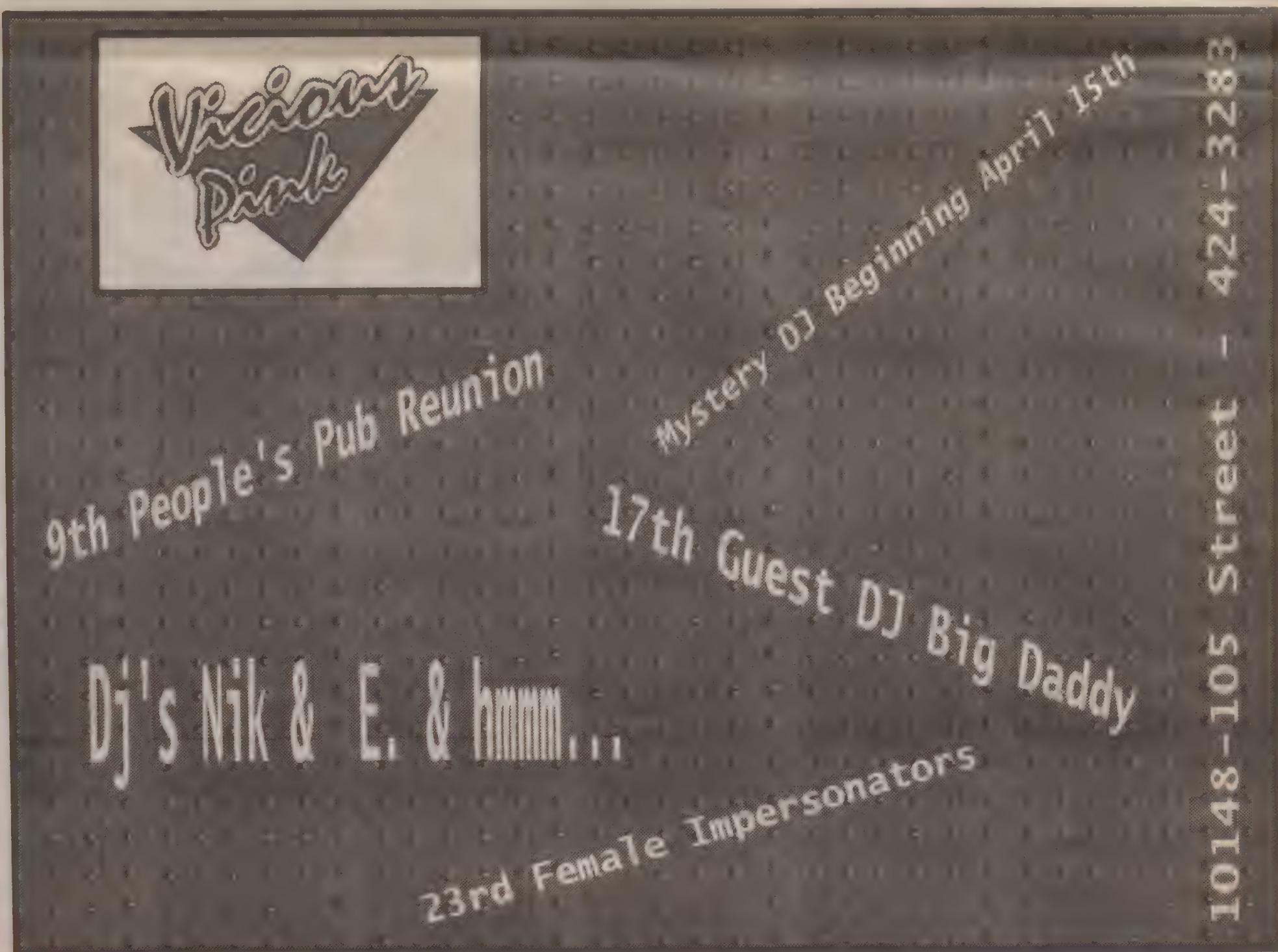
First, according to figures provided by the government of Alberta, there will be lower taxes for just about everyone. However, the tax reductions from 1998 levels will vary greatly depending on income levels, age and family status.

Tax Savings as proposed in Alberta 1999 provincial budget

Income	Single under 65	One income family*. or single parent family* (two children)	Two income family* (two children)
20,000	253	474	198
30,000	16	878	503
40,000	96	967	499
55,000	219	1,083	323
75,000	621	1,465	231

As you can see, one income or single parent families are the biggest winners. Single individuals with an income around \$ 30,000 gain the least. The provincial government says these tax changes will reduce provincial income taxes collected by \$ 600 million. These new 11% rate will come into effect in January 2002, provided the province's financial position allows for it at that time.

(David Ushko is a Chartered Accountant and provides a variety of accounting and tax services to individuals and owner managed businesses. This information is of a general nature and should not be relied on for specific situations. For specific advice or information please consult a professional advisor.) * A one income family or two-income family as described in the information provided by the government of Alberta would include only heterosexual married or common law couples, spouse does not include same-sex spouse.



Group Profiles

Edmonton Prime Timers

Edmonton Prime Timers is a chapter of Original Prime Timers Worldwide, an international social organization for older gay and bisexual men and their friends. "Older" is considered to be 40 years old and over but a younger man between 21 and 39 is welcome to join if sponsored by an older member. The purpose of Prime Timers is to provide an opportunity for men to socialize and join together in various activities.

A monthly meeting is held on the second Sunday of the month at the Unitarian Church of Edmonton (12530 110. Ave.) at 3 PM and features either a guest speaker or a discussion panel. A social mixer starts at 2:30 PM and supper at a restaurant follows.

Members also organize a wide range of special activities. Indoor activities are theatre nights, dining out, bridge nights, video nights, potluck suppers, and pub nights. Outdoor activities include picnics, camping trips, local walking tours, and outdoor sports. Any activity is possible as long as there is someone interested in organizing it. Prospective members are welcome to attend up to two meetings and/or activities before being asked to join.

A monthly newsletter, which is circulated to members only, gives details of the Edmonton Chapter's current and future programs, items of local interest, and information about other Chapters' activities.

Expenses are kept to a minimum and, except for some special activities, are covered by an annual membership fee of \$30.00 for the period May 1 - April 30.

The international organization, started in Boston, MA in 1987, now has members in over 30 chapters. Although most chapters are in North America, chapters are also found in Australia and Sweden. The Edmonton Chapter started in October, 1992.

Exchange of visits and information between the various Chapters is encouraged. International conventions have been held at Provincetown, MA. (1991) Vancouver, BC (1993), and Dallas-Fort Worth, TX (1995). The next one is scheduled for Palm Springs, CA in 1997.

Wominspace over the years

Confidentiality and privacy are studiously protected. A member may "come out" as much or as little as he wishes.

If you would like more information please call Peter at 426-7019 or Ron at mercury@planet.eon.net.

Wominspace Social and Recreational Association

Wominspace was started about 15 years ago by a group of womin who recognized the need for lesbians to have safe, accepting "spaces" in which to gather, dance, socialize, etc. With that mandate a board was struck and the organization was born. Two of the constant activities through the years have been the monthly dances and newsletters. As I look back through the newsletters I'm struck by how much some things have changed and how little other things have.

The newsletter has provided both an Edmonton and a "world" view on hot topics in the womin's community with a combination of local articles and global quotes, ferreted out by very knowledgeable editors and a dedicated network of volunteer writers and artists. The newsletter has always been mailed out to the membership but also made available free of charge to interested parties at various businesses throughout the city. These days we get requests from a number of businesses who would like to provide community information to their lesbian and bisexual clients.

The dances have pretty consistently happened on the 3rd Saturday of the month, rain or shine, long weekend or not. Though the dances have gone through major changes in catering, D.J.ing, and location, the entrance prices have remained constant. With many more options for womin to gather socially, the attendance at dances has diminished somewhat and we have returned to the hall we started at - Hazeldean. Although we will still hold larger dances, such as the Pride dance at Bonnie Doon, we look forward to many more at Hazeldean hall. Co-hosting the pride dance with G.L.C.C.E. reflects our board's firm commitment to celebrate together with our entire Lesbigay community.

has endeavoured to organize events to meet the womin's community needs. We have held camp outs, picnic, car rallies, sporting events, concerts, coffee houses, and a variety of fund raisers with local clubs and businesses. We have also supported community activities and issues by donating most of our profits to organizations and events requesting our support. The board is very proud of Wominspace's role in community development. We invite new ideas, input, and enthusiasm.

riots, and membership grew quickly thereafter.

As the support group and faith-filled community, Dignity encourages a process of self-understanding and personal integration with respect to issues including spirituality and sexuality and other aspects of our humanness. As members of Dignity, we self-identify as Catholics because our religious heritage - inherited, taught, or chosen has been the Roman Catholic Church. Dignity's relationship with the "official" church varies from chapter to chapter, and from member to member. In our Dignity communities, we come together to express our faith in God who created us and loves us, with Christ as our model.

As members of Dignity, we consider ourselves as "church." The fact that we retain our Catholic identity while remaining within the church, and while disagreeing with certain official church pronouncements on sexual theology, raises questions for some of our fellow Catholics. The Dignity community does not wish to create a new church, but rather we wish to maintain our identification as Catholics as we create new ways to live out what that means. For some members, the only contact with the sacramental life of the church is through Dignity's liturgical celebrations.

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Activists try to stem gay domestic abuse

Barry Lank
Bulletin Correspondent

Nobody, it seems, wants to talk about gay domestic violence. But that doesn't mean it doesn't exist.

A forum organized by the Gay Men's Domestic Violence Project and held last week at the Congregation Sha'ar Zahav in San Francisco's Castro District proved that point.

Although the sponsoring agency, Community United Against Violence (CUAV), had contacted several Jewish agencies about the event and distributed fliers for two weeks beforehand, the only people who showed up were the two scheduled speakers, the temple brotherhood president, two of his friends and one member of the press.

"It's not an issue people want to spend their free time discussing," CUAV project coordinator Greg Merrill says. It's not a fun topic, he says, "like sex." Or even safe sex.

"A lot of people don't want to admit [gay and lesbian domestic abuse] exists," adds San Francisco social worker Eddie Kaufman, who, along with writer and same-sex battering survivor Patrick Letellier, was scheduled to speak at Saturday's forum.

Gay domestic violence can include physical, emotional or sexual abuse, threats (such as threats to "out" the partner) and intimidation. An abuser might isolate his or her partner from friends and peers, treat the partner as inferior, hinder the partner's economic well-being or torment the partner's children.

CUAV maintains that domestic violence occurs as frequently among gays as among heterosexuals. Experts believe severe violence occurs in 15 to 20 percent of all relationships across the board. According to Merrill, every year some 400 callers ask CUAV for help. About 100 of those callers later visit the office in person for counseling or legal advice.

However, the number of shelters for battered gay men is minuscule. In San Francisco, the only options are homeless shelters, or AIDS programs if the abused person has AIDS. The United States has only six organizations designed to help gay men fight domestic abuse.

One reason the gay community balks at confronting abuse among its own members is that gays already face special problems such as HIV and discrimination, says Letellier. Publicizing abuse, he says, would be "airing dirty laundry."

"It's hard for someone in the synagogue to say, 'Someone you all know in the community has been battering me,'" Letellier says.

All abused persons, gay and heterosexual alike, tend to be isolated from their communities, he adds. But gays and lesbians face additional issues. Some are closeted and thus afraid to make their problem public. Others, new to the gay community, mistakenly assume all gay relationships are as abusive as their own. To make matters worse, many community bonds have vanished in the wake of AIDS.

"When I ask people if they can talk about this with any of their friends, they say 'All my friends are dead,'" Letellier says.

He goes on to say that domestic-abuse counseling services tend to have a theoretical problem with gay domestic abuse. Predominant theories view domestic violence as an extreme example of male dominance in a traditional — i.e., patriarchal — male-female relationship. This makes same-sex abuse a hazy concept for many social workers and police.

Police tend to view much gay domestic abuse as "mutual combat," Letellier says. Although laws against domestic abuse require less injury than a standard assault in order for police to make an arrest, the laws' language presumes a marriage between partners of the opposite sex. So a gay man or lesbian must sustain greater injuries than a heterosexual man or woman in order to have their partner arrested, according to Letellier.

Some of this may help explain why no one showed up to the seminar at Sha'ar Zahav last Saturday. But Merrill does not count the effort as a loss. One person who picked up a flier for the ill-fated forum has since phoned in to report being abused. That person is currently receiving counseling.

"So it was all worth it," Merrill says.

As Volunteers we welcome your comments at Times .10. Please send comments, articles or information on your group to times10editor@hotmail.com

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The Rayven's Nest

Rayven D Dragonfyre

Has someone ever influenced you in your life? Influenced not just in the small matters of fashion and social politics, but in the big life-changing situations. Those big decisions where you ask yourself "How will I be bettered or worsened if I make this choice?"

Wouldn't it be nice if you could count on someone offering advice that has your best interest at heart? What if they offered advice that isn't selfish, or half-hearted, or idealistic? Having someone who can make intelligent, wise observations and objectively describe the situation, without being fussed over with emotional stress, can be the key to making the correct decisions to right your path and set your dreams in motion.

Such a person will become invaluable, trusted and even loved. So go out there and find that someone. Easier said than done, right? The trick is to try and remove yourself from your own emotions long enough to realize that such a person will, though you may not like them much now, try to make your life easier to the best of their capabilities. Now, how does one remove oneself from one's emotions?

The trick to removing yourself from your feelings is to ignore them. Then, once that is done, you can look at whether or not you can trust this person to be up front and honest with you. Sometimes that honesty can hurt, but it may be for the best.

However, do not mistake me. I am not saying you should put your life in his or her hands. Advice is not a direct order, nor do you have to follow it. The decision is ultimately up to you. You have to decide and live with it. Advice is only meant to sum up your situation and give you a chance to discuss your options.

So what the hell am I talking about? Simply this: We all need a person to turn to in our trials. Maybe that person is a parent, a friend, a pastor (for the stoutly religious), an acquaintance, an authority figure of some kind, or if you can detach yourself from your feelings, then you may not need someone at all. That person may offer you a hug to make you feel better if you're down, a kick in the pants if you're lagging, some questions to make you think your way through it or just plain sit with you as moral support.

Regardless of who we turn to, that person is going to be helping you. Someone very dear to me once told me this: G-I-G-O. Or more simply put: garbage in, garbage out. Once you have the advice, the next step is to sort the garbage from the gold. Only you can decide what's garbage and what's gold.



Okay, now you've sorted it out... what are you going to do with it? Are you going to say to yourself "that's good advice and it will really help" or will you let it slip away without applying it? If you let it slip away, then you've just wasted an enormous amount of energy for nothing. You may as well have grafted your lips to your own ass. Now, after "X" amount of time, you're back in the same situation and getting the same advice you got before (puff, puff, running around these circles with you is, puff, tiresome). Now that I've got my daily exercise, what do you say we teach ourselves to recognize the treasures we have and hang on to them. Every single one of us can make our dreams come true if we keep our attention fixed on them, but keep our eyes open and looking ahead for the rough roads and brace for the bumpy rides. Eventually things will get better and, before you know it, you're living those dreams and not even knowing it as you dream another dream (what's this? Fog? Maybe I should pull my head out of the clouds and finish this up before I lose you).

Did I confuse any of you? If so, please contact me via E-Mail, or if you don't have access to a computer, then drop off a message at the Times 10 office. Make sure to mark it to Rayven and they will make sure that I get it.

Whew, that was a wild ride. I think I'm dizzy.
Peace and Be well
moon_knyght@hotmail.com
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Infantile

Morgan Refshauge

That's the only way I can describe a large portion of our so-called "community". Look at us! It is no wonder we are still shunned and frowned upon by much of the straight society. We have this group fighting that group, these people calling those people names. Gay organizations (if you can call some of them organizations) are falling apart all over Edmonton. With all these active groups in our midst, if we were to actually set aside our petty differences and quit the childish squabbling, we could become a powerful community. Until then, we are not a community, we are the gay society of Edmonton. We have forgotten what community means!

Here, I will break it down for you. These are all the things I get from the word: commUNIT, comm...unite, comm..UNITY. It almost sounds like calling a cat. Come, Unity, come! But, alas, it will lift its head and go back to sleep (if you are lucky), or continue chasing mice. Get my drift! Grow UP! Stop bitching: "He said, she said" doesn't cut it anymore! Think on a larger scale. Now, I will be the first to admit that there is much brilliance in our gay Society. Along with quite a few intelligent and outspoken individuals, but what carries more oomph? Here is an idea: sometimes looking out for number one means helping others as well. Ever heard the phrase "Strength in numbers"? If we unite, and decide what we want, we will become a TRUE community. Together we can work on common goals with thousands of voices, thus having a more vocal and powerful community. Just a thought...

Thirteen

Danielle Peers

Thirteen days and thirteen hours
And thirteen worlds with different flowers.
One and one and one is three,
Add ten more, that makes thirteen.
Under ladders with black stray cats
Friday's coming, what about that?
Don't walk there, there's thirteen people,
There's the church, and there's the steeple.
Thirteen ways to show I care,
Twelve is good, and fourteen's fair.
What's your deal? So what? I'm dead,
Thirteen times take me to bed.
One, two, three, and now I'm gone,
Thirteen tombstones on my lawn.
Everyone here knows everyone here,
so hey man...It's okay...
Superstitions to pull me through,
I was thirteen once anyway...

Born To Be Bi

by Megan

Hello, my name is Megan; I am a bi female. I started to think about my sexual interests in high school; I didn't actually come out until a year after I graduated. I came out to my friends before I told my parents. My very first experience at a bar was a gay bar when I was nineteen; I was there with one of my closest friends and his boyfriend at the time. I walked to the bar to get a drink and an icky woman started to hit on me. This woman was a scary biker chick that could have been old enough to be my mother. No matter what I said to her, she wouldn't leave me alone. So, my friend walked over to where we were standing, grabbed my hand and told the woman that I was with him. I was sure glad that he noticed the trouble I was in and came to the rescue; she left me alone for the rest of the evening. What a great experience that was, not!! Even though I still wasn't quite sure whether I was straight, bi, or gay I went to the gay bars because that was where all my closest friends went to.

I came out to my parents when I was around twenty-two; they took it well. I told my mother first. We were preparing dinner and I just casually brought up the topic. I just asked her what she thought about people liking the same sex as themselves, and then I told her that I liked both sexes. She told me that as long as the person doesn't hurt me, she would support me seeing both guys and women. I was glad that both my parents were okay with it; I have friends that weren't so fortunate. I hope that when I have children, I will be as supportive as my parents have been to me.

When people hear that I am bi-sexual, they say that I have the best of both worlds. I believe that is true once you meet someone, but until then it is quite frustrating. My problem is that I always go for the gay men and straight women; I am cursed in the relationship department. I don't know why I go for what I can't have, HELP!!!! Well, I am twenty-four years old now and I am still single. Wish me luck!

TIMES .10
Your Magazine of Choice
Vol 4, Number 3, March/April 1997

Abuse
Identity
Business
Pg 11

Identity
g's 5, 8, 16